THE BIBLE OF BOXING

# RING

## ALVAREZ vs. KHAN PREVIEW

## PLAYING WITH FIRE

### T'S CANELO'S STRENGTH vs. KHAN'S SPEED P.32

## KHAN'S METTLE

HE KEEPS GETTING UP P.44

## MEXICAN TRAILBLAZERS

A LOOK BACK AT 5 LEGENDS P.38

## GREATEST 175-POUNDER POLL

AND THE WINNER IS ... P.50

## WORDS THAT HURT

HAME ON PACQUIAO P.66

07
0 72246 00396 1
$8.95

# BOXING

TRAIN HARD. HIT HARDER.

AVAILABLE AT WWW.ATHLETEPS.COM

aps
ATHLETE PERFORMANCE SOLUTIONS, LLC

TOM HOGAN

CANELO ALVAREZ VS. AMIR KHAN

**32 GUIDING CANELO**
GOLDEN BOY'S CHALLENGING MISSION
By Ron Borges

**38 ALVAREZ'S PREDECESSORS**
A LOOK AT FIVE MEXICAN TRAILBLAZERS
By Don Stradley

**44 THE PATH OF KHAN**
BRITISH STAR IS A MODEL OF PERSISTENCE
By Elliot Worsell

**50 THE BEST AT 175 POUNDS**
POLL OF EXPERTS DECIDES MODERN KING
By Thomas Hauser

**54 HALL OF FAME: LUPE PINTOR**
MEXICAN STAR FINALLY GETS THE CALL
By Lee Groves

**60 DEARTH OF RING CHAMPS**
THE CHANCES OF FILLING 13 VACANCIES
By Doug Fischer

**66 PACQUIAO'S SHAME**
ANTI-GAY COMMENTS MAR HIS LEGACY
By Norm Frauenheim

2016 OLYMPICS

**70 PROS IN THE GAMES**
OPINION: THIS IS A VERY BAD IDEA
By Tom Gray

**72 CASSIUS CLAY'S OLYMPICS**
THE GREATEST'S EMERGENCE, PART II
By Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith

Canelo Alvarez (above left) and Amir Khan will be eye to eye again on May 7.

COVER PHOTO OF ALVAREZ COURTESY OF GOLDEN BOY PROMOTIONS

## DEPARTMENTS


**5 RINGSIDE**

**6 OPENING SHOT**

**8 COME OUT WRITING**

**11 ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES**

**14 BEST I FACED: NINO BENVENUTI**

**16 READY TO GRUMBLE** By David Greisman

**18 JABS AND STRAIGHT WRITES** By Thomas Hauser

**20 RING IQ** By Bernard Hopkins

**22 OUTSIDE THE ROPES** By Brian Harty

**24 RING RATINGS PACKAGE**

**81 ACROSS THE POND** By Gareth A Davies

**84 DOUGIE'S MAILBAG** By Doug Fischer

**86 NEW FACES: EGIDIJUS KAVALIAUSKAS** By Mitch Abramson

**88 WOMEN'S BOXING** By Thomas Gerbasi

**90 RINGSIDE REPORTS** By Norm Frauenheim

**94 COMING UP**

**96 FROM THE ARCHIVE**

**98 AT THE FIGHTS**

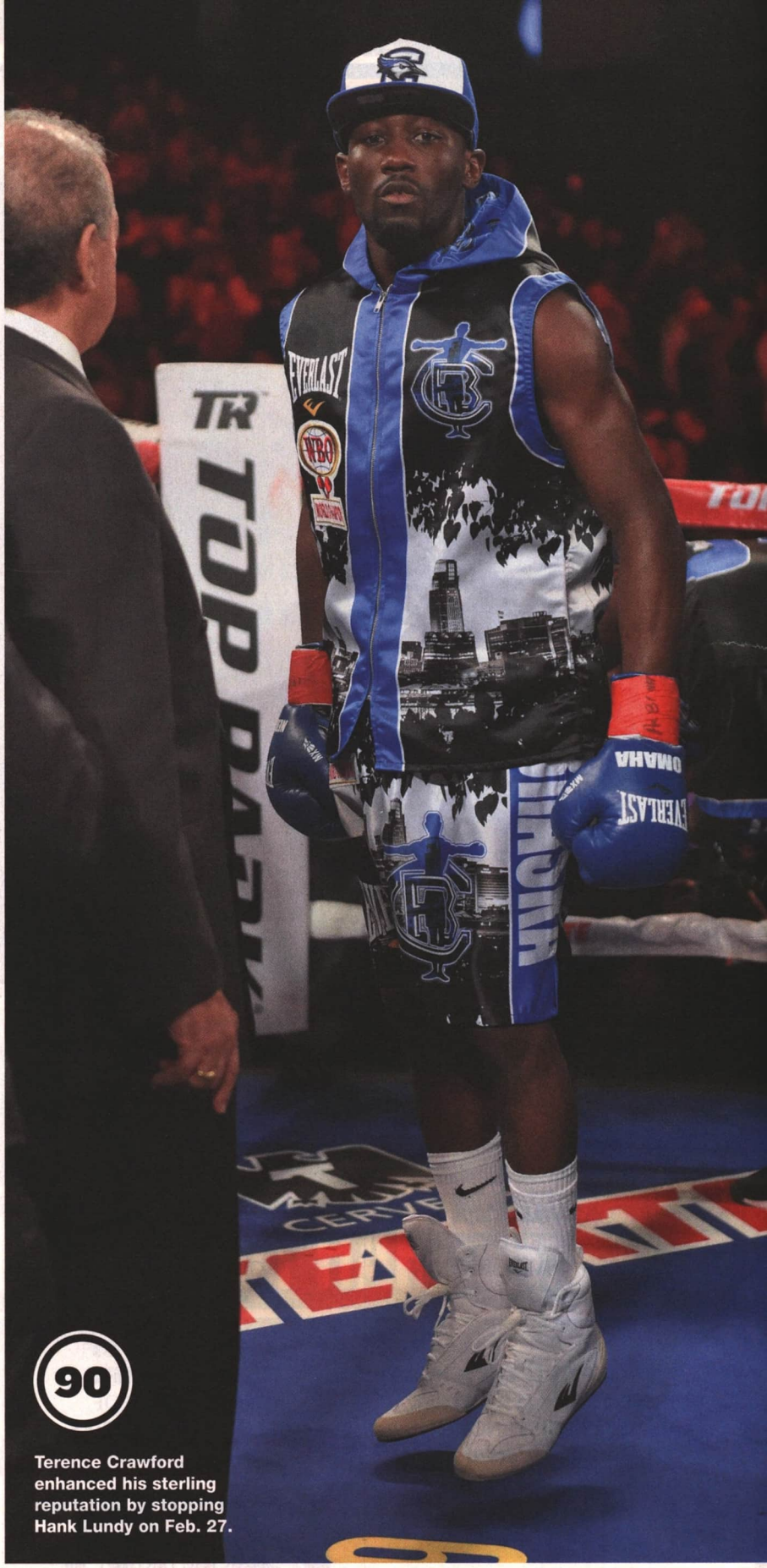

## AT RINGTV.COM

**PETER NELSON ON HBO**
Network sports chief discusses the future
GO TO: http://bit.do/peter-nelson-hbo

**DEGUARDIA SR.'S PASSING**
Joe Jr. honored dad by getting back to work
GO TO: http://bit.do/joe-deguardia

## FOLLOW US

FACEBOOK.COM/RINGTV • @RINGMAGAZINE • THERINGDIGITAL • INSTAGRAM.COM/RINGTV#




**90**

**Terence Crawford enhanced his sterling reputation by stopping Hank Lundy on Feb. 27.**

The RING

VOLUME 95, NO. 5 / JULY 2016

FOUNDER
Nathaniel Fleischer (1888-1972)

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Michael Rosenthal

MANAGING EDITOR
Brian Harty

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Douglass Fischer

ART DIRECTOR
Lamar Clark

CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Julio Ramirez Jr.

CONTROLLER
Deborah L. Harrison

CIRCULATION DIRECTOR
Kenneth J. Gudaitis

ADVERTISING INQUIRIES
Advertising@sepublications.com
215-643-3069

SUBSCRIPTION INQUIRIES
BACK ISSUES INQUIRIES
DIGITAL ORDERS INQUIRIES
Sports and Entertainment Publications
P.O. Box 433122
Palm Coast, Fl 32164-3122
800-846-6438
thering@emailcustomerservice.com

SEND EDITORIAL COMMENTS TO:
comeoutwriting@sepublications.com
or P.O. Box 251753,
Los Angeles CA, 90025

THE RING (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 95, NO. 5 (July 2016), is published nine times per year (no issues in June, October and February) by Sports and Entertainment Publications, LLC, P.O. Box 90254 Brooklyn, NY 11209. Periodicals postage paid at Brooklyn, NY 11209 and additional post offices. Postmasters: Send change of address notices to: THE RING, P.O. Box 433122, Palm Coast, FL 32164-3122. Single copy price $8.95 in U.S.A. and Canada (£4.95 in the U.K.). Subscription price U.S. And possession $49.00 for nine issues; Canada and Mexico add $7 for nine issues per year and all remaining countries add $15.00 for nine issues per year. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage. The entire contents of this magazine are copyright ©2016 Sports and Entertainment Publications, LLC. No part of this magazine may be reproduced without the written permission of the publisher. All rights reserved. Publisher is not responsible for the accuracy of the content of advertisements appearing in this magazine, nor the delivery or quality of merchandise or services offered. No endorsement of any such advertisement is intended or implied. Advertisers and agencies assume liability for claims arising from the content of their advertisements. FOR ADVERTISING INQUIRES AND RATES: (213) 233-2952. U.S. / Canadian and International distribution by Kable Distribution Services Inc., 14 Wall Street, Suite 4C, New York, NY 10022. UK distribution by Comag Tavistock Rd., West Drayton, Middlesex UB77QE, England. Printed in U.S.A



# A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

**I have almost nothing positive** to say about the major sanctioning bodies, whose greed has diluted their "championships" to such a degree that they're next to meaningless. And even what I'm about to write shouldn't be construed as a pat on the back, as one organization is simply correcting – or at least attempting to correct – a wrong.

WBA president Gilberto Mendoza Jr., evidently aware of criticism, recently vowed to pare down the number of titleholders it crowns. That is significant news.

As it is, the organization can have three titleholders – super (or unified/undisputed), world (or regular) and interim – in a single division. The more titles, the more sanctioning fees the fighters must pay. This type of scam the past few decades has put money into the bank accounts of the sanctioning bodies – and, to be fair, serves as a promotional tool for promoters and even the fighters – but it hurts the sport.

Only the most hardcore fans can keep track of all the champions.

Well, we recently saw evidence that Mendoza is following through on his promise: The WBA ordered "super" 118-pound champ Juan Carlos Payano to fight "regular" titleholder Jamie McDonnell, a fight that could take place this summer. The result would be the elimination of one "champion" if they actually fight.

Mendoza said he also expects to have only one heavyweight champion in the near future, as he plans to have his various titleholders fight one another in that division too. As it stands, three big men have what the WBA considers titles: "super" champ Tyson Fury, "regular" titleholder Lucas Browne and "interim" champ Luis Ortiz.

And Mendoza said he doesn't plan to stop there. It appears he intends to have his "champions" meet one another on a regular basis in an effort to whittle away more titles.

These aren't huge steps in light of the fact that we'd have a still-ridiculous 68 champions even if each of the four major sanctioning bodies had only one in each weight class. They're small steps in the right direction, though.

The fewer the champions, the more each title means.

"I am working to reduce the titles," Mendoza told ESPN.com. "At first some promoters [might] complain. I just tell them it is my final decision. They would have to live with it."

I like Mendoza's newfound attitude.

Of course, we're not likely to see one world champion per division, as was once the norm. Even casual fans knew who the champs were at one time. I'd be happy with 68 champions for the time being, though.

Then, after that's accomplished, we can hope the powers that be find value in unification bouts. OK, I know it sounds like I'm dreaming. The sanctioning bodies will never put the welfare of the sport ahead of the bottom line even if it might make financial sense to do so long-term.

At the same time, I never in a million years thought Mendoza would do what he did. There's hope. RING

Terence Crawford (left) has reason to be cocky: It appears no one can touch him. He put Hank Lundy away in five rounds on Feb. 27

## NO MORE, ROY

There's no sadder sight in the game than a once-dominant force hanging around past his sell-by date for final paydays or desperate attempts at a return to glory. But Roy Jones Jr.'s loss to Enzo Maccarinelli recently went one step further. Enzo himself had spoken about his failing career after losses to Ovill McKenzie and Juergen Braehmer and then subsequently destroyed a man judged by many as the best of his generation in RJJ. Yes, Roy had strung half a dozen wins together since a loss to Denis Lebedev but he was kidding no one when he fought Maccarinelli, who never established himself more than fleetingly on world level. When an ex-pound-for-pound king is demolished by a man who had previously questioned his own time in the sport, it's time to hang the gloves up and leave them hung up.

**Tom Digby**
*Yorkshire, U.K.*

## ALPHABET BLUES

I crave consistency as it relates to ratings and how champions are established across all weight divisions. As of late, we have all had to endure ludicrous decisions by the sanctioning bodies. There appears to be no rhyme or reason as to how fighters are ranked and how they are selected for "championship" fights. What is the criteria for becoming a ranked fighter and for moving up the rankings? What is the criteria for securing a title shot? Why do all of the sanctioning bodies contradict each other at nearly every turn? The sanctioning bodies should be held accountable! If they cannot be held accountable, they should be forced to disband. Every sanctioning body has a champion for each weight division, yet the majority of boxing fans would struggle to identify a single one if they saw them walking down the street. Greed has taken over the sanctioning bodies for quite some time. I wish we could go back to one champion per weight division and that everyone would adopt the RING Ratings criteria. This would provide a transparent and known process for ranking fighters and establishing champions. I believe that going to one champion would further legitimize the boxing game and provide the respective champions from each weight division the credit they deserve.

**Joe Grantham**
*Dearborn, Michigan*

## ANARCHY

The problem with boxing is that without a governing body, the best don't have to fight the best. It becomes about the more popular fighter leveraging their brand to stack the deck in his favor. That is a shame and demeans the sport. The biggest case now is Canelo Alvarez creating his own weight class – 155 pounds – when he is undeniably a middleweight because of his popularity. That's the biggest issue in boxing. No mandate for the best to fight the best on even terms.

**Edgar Fox**
*New York, New York*

## NOT DESERVING

Ricky Burns is going for another alphabet title at a third weight against Michele Di Rocco on May 21 despite achieving little of note since he lost to Terence Crawford. That defeat came after Raymundo Beltran had visited Glasgow and systematically re-arranged Ricky's face and jaw only to go home with a draw. Since Crawford, Ricky has grinded out three wins against a who's-he of uninteresting opponents and lost twice more, to Dejan Zlaticanin and Omar Figueroa. Is there anyone more undeserving of a title shot than Ricky Burns?

**Ross Clark**
*Edinburgh, Scotland*

**Editor's note:** Burns and Di Rocco will be fighting for the WBA's "regular" 140-pound title, which the RING doesn't recognize when a "super" champion is in place. At the time we went to press Adrien Broner, who was scheduled to face Ashley Theophane on April 1, was the WBA titleholder.

## TIGER WON

I just read the article about Bob Foster in the April 2016 edition of THE RING with great pleasure. However, Frankie DePaula did not beat the great Dick Tiger as the article states on Page 75. But DePaula did indeed get the title shot.

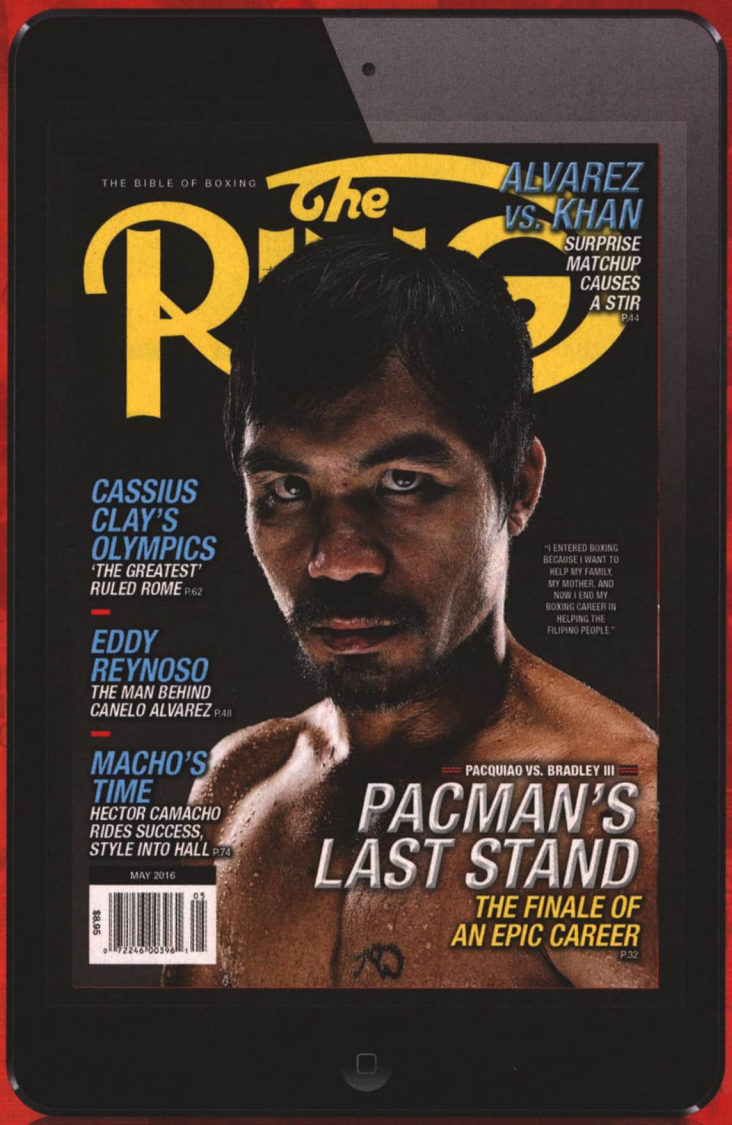
**Claus Jensen**
*Hjoering, Denmark*

**Editor's note:** You're right, Claus. That was a mistake on our part. Tiger won the 1968 RING Fight of the Year by a unanimous decision yet it was DePaula who received a shot at Bob Foster's light heavyweight title. THE RING regrets the error.

***WRITE TO THE RING!*** Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 251753, Los Angeles, CA 90025
comeoutwriting@sepublications.com ★ Emailed letters will include a writer's email address unless a city and state of origin is provided. Letters may be edited for reasons of space and clarity.

# DOWNLOAD The RING APP

## AND PREVIEW THE DIGITAL EDITION FOR FREE!




Available on the App Store

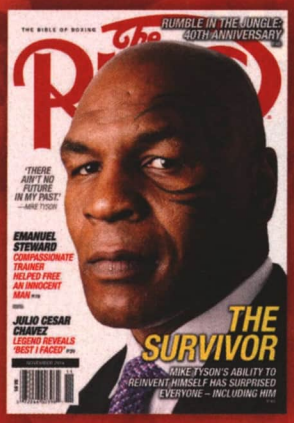
GET IT ON Google play

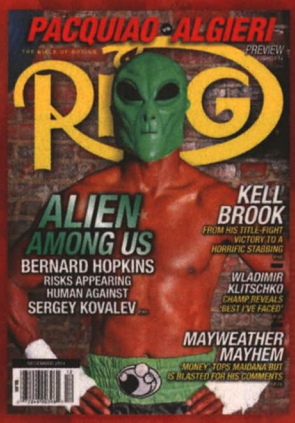
amazon.com

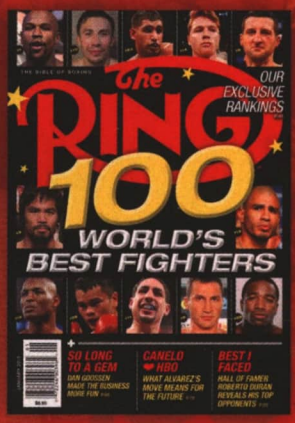
**SUBSCRIBE TODAY »**

The RING

# SUBSCRIBE TODAY AND SAVE !






**Please Check Off The One You Wish To Order:**

**Save Over 35% Off Newsstand Price!**

☐ Six Issues of The Ring for $33.70* 6500TR

**Save Over 50% Off Newsstand Price!**

☐ One Year of The Ring for $49.00* 6500TR

Plus The Ring Digital Edition for Free (A $24.00 value)!

**SUPER SAVER—Over 60% Off Newsstand!**

☐ Two Years of The Ring for $75.00* 6500TR

Plus The Ring Digital Edition for Free (A $45.00 VALUE)!

**DIGITAL SUBSCRIPTION—Over 70% Off Newsstand!**

☐ One Year of The Ring Digital Edition for $24.00 6500DG

**MAIL TO:** Sports & Entertainment Publications LLC
P.O. Box 433122, Palm Coast, FL 32164-3122

**TELEPHONE:** 1-800-846-6438

**E-MAIL:** thering@emailcustomerservice.com

**Please indicate method of payment:**

☐ Check or money order (enclosed and payable to Sports & Entertainment Publications LLC)
☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS

Card #__ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __ __

Expiration Date: ___/___ (MO/YR) __ __ __ (3-DIGIT SECURITY CODE)

Signature:_____

NAME_____

ADDRESS_____APT.____

CITY_____STATE_____ZIP_____

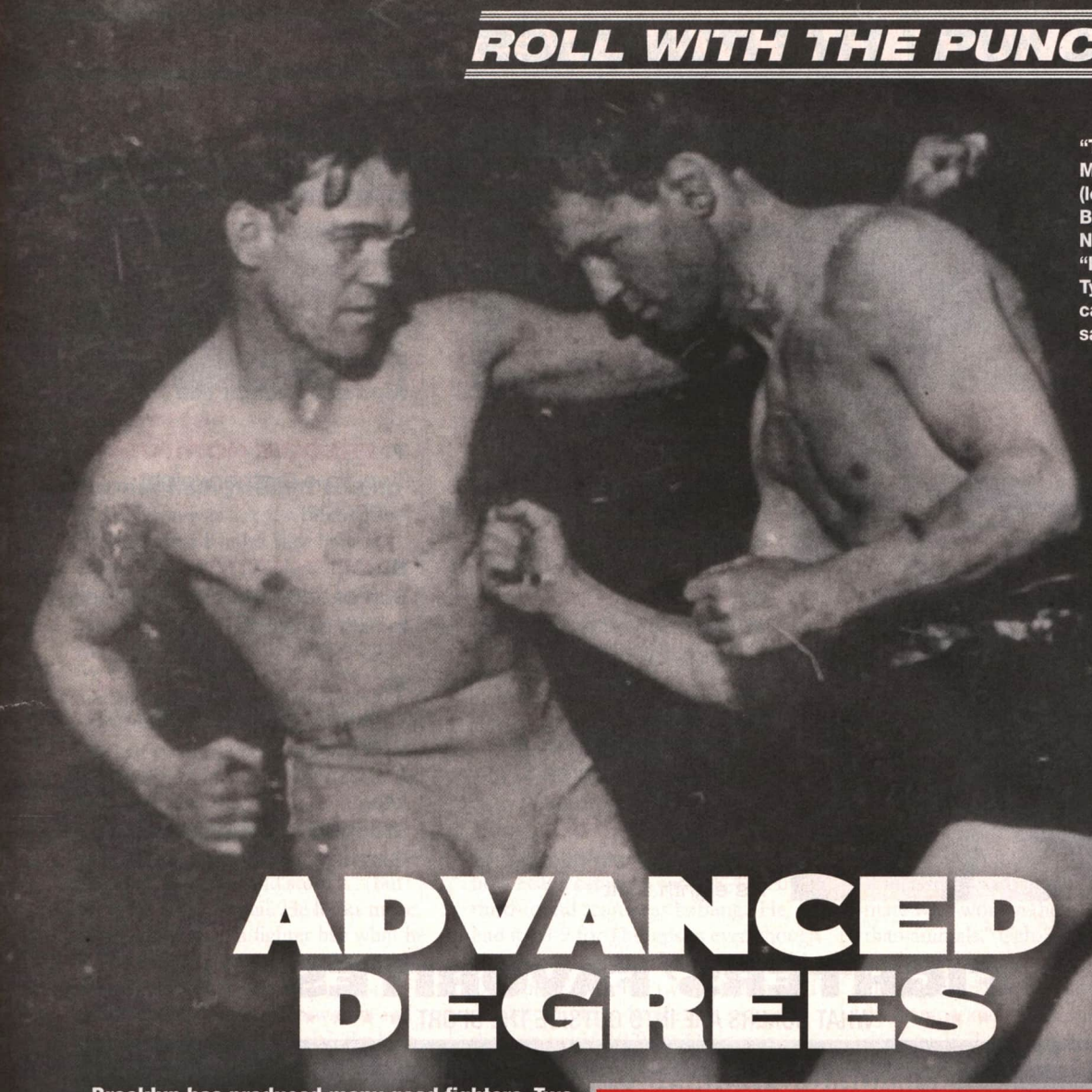
E-MAIL_____
(necessary for digital subscription)

TELEPHONE_____

*FOR CANADA AND MEXICO: $52.50 FOR 6 ISSUES; $56.00 FOR ONE YEAR; $90.00 FOR TWO YEARS. ALL OTHER COUNTRIES: $81 FOR 6 ISSUES; $84.00 FOR ONE YEAR; $105.00 FOR TWO YEARS. INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDERS ONLY IN U.S. FUNDS ONLY. AIRMAIL SHIPPING ONLY OUTSIDE THE U.S. PLEASE ALLOW UP TO EIGHT WEEKS BEFORE YOU RECEIVE YOUR FIRST MAGAZINE. OFFER EXPIRES DECEMBER 31, 2016

**TO ORDER ONLINE, OR GO TO:**
**WWW.RINGTV.CRAVEONLINE.COM/SUBSCRIBE**

**TO RENEW SUBSCRIPTION, GO TO:**
**HTTPS://SSL.PALMCOASTD.COM/28501/APPS/LOGINSSO**

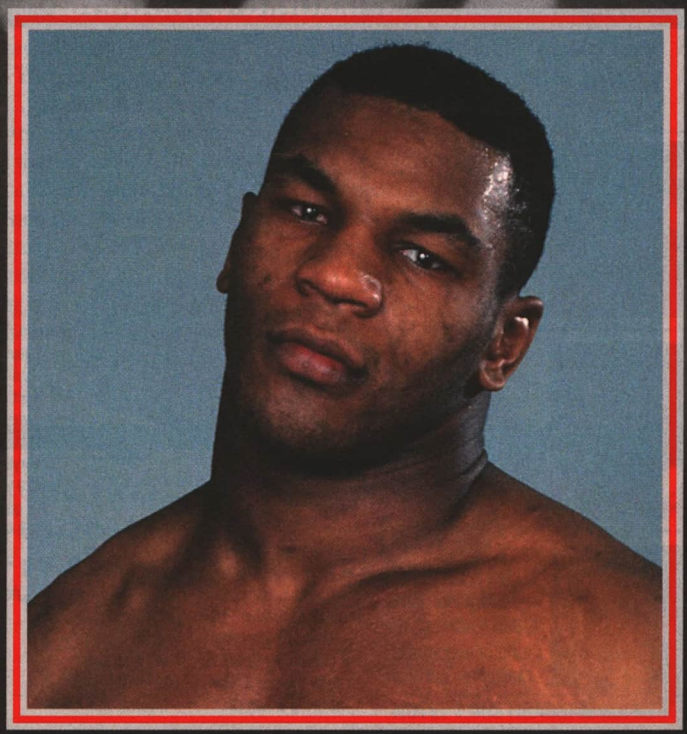


"Terrible" Terry McGovern (left, fighting Battling Nelson) and "Iron" Mike Tyson (inset) came from the same digs.

# ADVANCED DEGREES

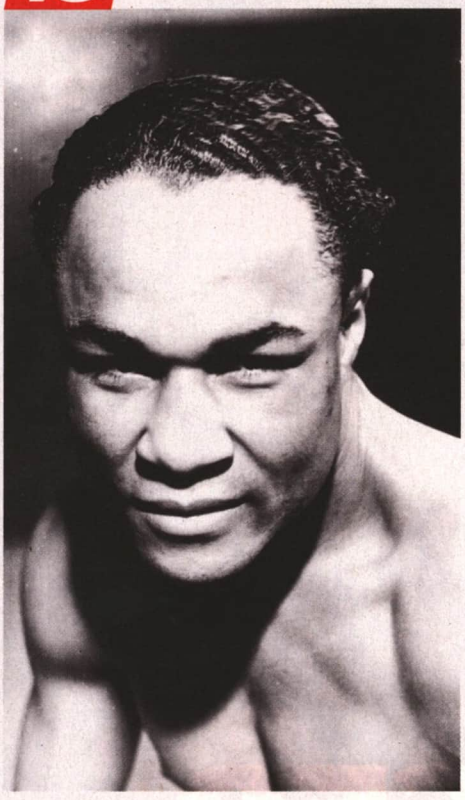
**Brooklyn has produced many good fighters. Two** of the best – "Terrible" Terry McGovern and "Iron" Mike Tyson – fought almost a century apart and at vastly different weights. Still, it took regular Advanced Degrees contributor Gregg Morgan only nine steps to connect them. McGovern, a featherweight, fought between 1897 and 1908. Tyson, a heavyweight, last fought in 2005.

**Terry McGovern** fought
**Pedlar Palmer,** who fought
**Sam Russell,** who fought
**Ted 'Kid' Lewis,** who fought
**Maxie Rosenbloom,** who fought
**Alberto Santiago Lovell,** who fought
**Archie Moore,** who fought
**Muhammad Ali,** who fought
**Larry Holmes,** who fought
**Mike Tyson** »



**Note:** Morgan pointed out a coincidence: McGovern and Tyson both finished their careers with 44 knockouts, according to BoxRec.com.

# 10 A MONTHLY BOXING LIST



**This month:** New IBF heavyweight titleholder Charles Martin is only the latest champion with strong ties to St. Louis. Here are 10 (in chronological order).

**« 1. HENRY ARMSTRONG**
Considered one of the two or three best ever

**2. ARCHIE MOORE**
All-time great retired with 132 knockouts

**3. VIRGIL AKINS**
Was world welterweight champ in 1958

**4. SONNY LISTON**
Feared champion taken down by Muhammad Ali

**5. LEON SPINKS**
Upset Ali to win title in only his eighth fight

**6. MICHAEL SPINKS**
First 175-pound champ to win heavyweight title

**7. FREDDIE NORWOOD**
Two-time featherweight titleholder

**8. CORY SPINKS**
Son of Leon won world titles in two divisions

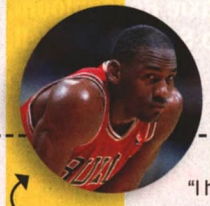
**9. DEVON ALEXANDER**
Has won three titles in two divisions

**10. CHARLES MARTIN**
Stopped Vyacheslav Glazkov to win belt

# FIGHTERS' FAVORITES

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ WHAT BOXERS ARE INTO OUTSIDE THE SPORT ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**1. HASSAN N'DAM** MIDDLEWEIGHT CONTENDER » **2. CHARLES MARTIN** HEAVYWEIGHT TITLEHOLDER » **3. MAURICIO HERRERA** JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT CONTENDER

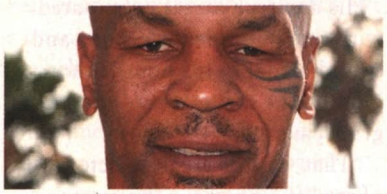
| FIGHTER | MUSIC | CAR | FOOD | TATTOOS | ATHLETE OUTSIDE BOXING | MOVIE | VIDEO GAME |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | "Rap and R&B." | "My car is a 4x4 Volkswagen Touareg, (my dream car is) **Range Rover 4x4**." | "African food." | "Don't have, don't like." | "Teddy Riner (judo)." | "'The Way of the Dragon.'" | "'Street Fighter.'" "'Mortal Kombat X.'" |
| 2. | "R&B, jazz." "I like a lot of music … **Marvin Gaye**, Bob Marley, a little bit of everything. Mostly the old stuff." | "I drive an Audi A7, dream car is a Bentley Continental." | "Oxtail." | "I have 17, all over my body. One of my favorites says, 'Fight my struggle.' It means when you get in the ring with me you've got to fight everything I've been through in 29 years of not a good life. It's gonna be a tough fight." | "LeBron James."  "Michael Jordan." | "'Training Day.'" | |
| 3. | | "I'm driving my wife's 2015 (Hyundai) Genesis. I'm always going in other people's cars, I don't drive too much. I'm not really a car guy but the Genesis is a pretty nice car. I think I have my dream car." | "A Mexican dish, Carne en su Jugo. It's meat with juices and chili. There's nothing I don't like but that's my favorite dish." | "No tattoos, I'm not a fan of them. I'm afraid of needles." | | "I have a couple: 'Dumb and Dumber' and 'This is 40.'" | "I don't really play too many video games but I used to like 'Street Fighter.'" |

— **Anson Wainwright**

# GOOD, BAD, WORSE

By **Michael Rosenthal**

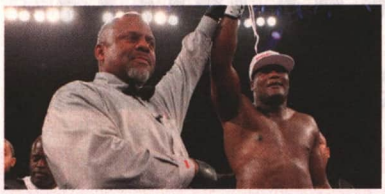
THE BEST AND WORST IN BOXING FROM THE PAST MONTH



## GOOD

**Former heavyweight champ**

Mike Tyson was asked a damn good question on a Kimbo Slice Fights video: "You at 20 , Muhammad Ali at 20. Who wins this fight?" I liked Tyson's response: "There's no man like him, there just isn't. Everything we have he supersedes us in, even our arrogance and our ego. He's fast but he really doesn't have a great quality that you can really see besides his agility (and he's) not afraid to let punches fly. But other than that, he never threw a body punch in his life. He doesn't have a good defense; his speed was his defense. He moves and stuff. … (But) Ali is a f--king animal. He looks more like a model than a fighter but what he is, he's like a Tyrannosaurus Rex with a pretty face. He's just mean and evil and he'll take you to deep waters and drown you. He's very special, the best in the world." The interviewer asked: "So … do you beat him?" Tyson: "No, nobody beats him. Why? … It's him doing it … pop pop pop pop pop pop pop pop and never stopping. And he's dead tired. And I say, 'I can't beat that man, hell f--king no, hell f--king no, no f--king way." I applaud Tyson for his knowledge of great fighters from the past and his honesty. Who do I think would've won that fight? What "Iron Mike" said.



## BAD

**It's been ages since anyone**

was inducted into my private hall of shame "Poor Judge-ment" but I now welcome Lloyd Scaife after his performance on March 5 in Washington, D.C., his hometown. The judge somehow scored the fight between Luis Ortiz and D.C. fighter Tony Thompson 48-47 for Ortiz even though Ortiz seemed to dominate almost every second of every round and put Thompson down three times in five-plus rounds. The appropriate score was 50-43, the tally of the other two judges. There is no telling how Scaife came up with 48-47. His third-round score was baffling. He had it 10-9 for Thompson even though Thompson was knocked down. Huh? Of course, the other two judges scored it 10-8 for Ortiz. Scaife also scored the first round 10-9 for Ortiz even though Thompson went down in that round. And he scored Round 5 for Thompson even though Ortiz clearly dominated it. You get the idea. To its credit, the D.C. Boxing and Wrestling Commission announced a few days after the fight that it was investigating Scaife's scorecard, although it hadn't made a determination by our press time. I don't know Scaife. And I guess everyone is entitled to a bad night. Scaife's scoring was so out there, though, that he deserves to be censured in some way. The fighters and the sport deserve better than that.

## WORSE

**Manny, Manny, Manny. No**

one who has gotten to know Manny Pacquiao should've been shocked about his comments on homosexuality in February. He's a simple guy who has become ultra-religious in recent years. And, from his perspective, homosexuality violates the basic tenets of his religion. Here's the problem: It's not acceptable to compare people to animals even in the name of religion. Pacquiao said: "It's common sense. Do you see animals mating with the same sex? Animals are better because they can distinguish male from female. If men mate with men and women mate with women they are worse than animals." Ugh. Pacquiao quickly apologized but then doubled down, citing bible pages that advocate death for homosexuals. That did further damage. In the end, Pacquiao lost sponsor Nike – which called his comments "abhorrent" – and a lot of respect in spite of his remarkable career and the good he does in his native Philippines. I think going forward he should follow the lead of Tyson Fury, who made similar comments and also apologized. Fury said he's going to hold tight to his beliefs but keep them to himself. Are you listening, Manny?

# RING POLL

**A MONTHLY POLL OF OUR RINGTV.COM READERS**

Will the top Mexican fighter be too big and strong for his quick-handed British opponent? We asked: **What will be the result of the Canelo Alvarez-Amir Khan fight on May 7?** Here is how you responded.

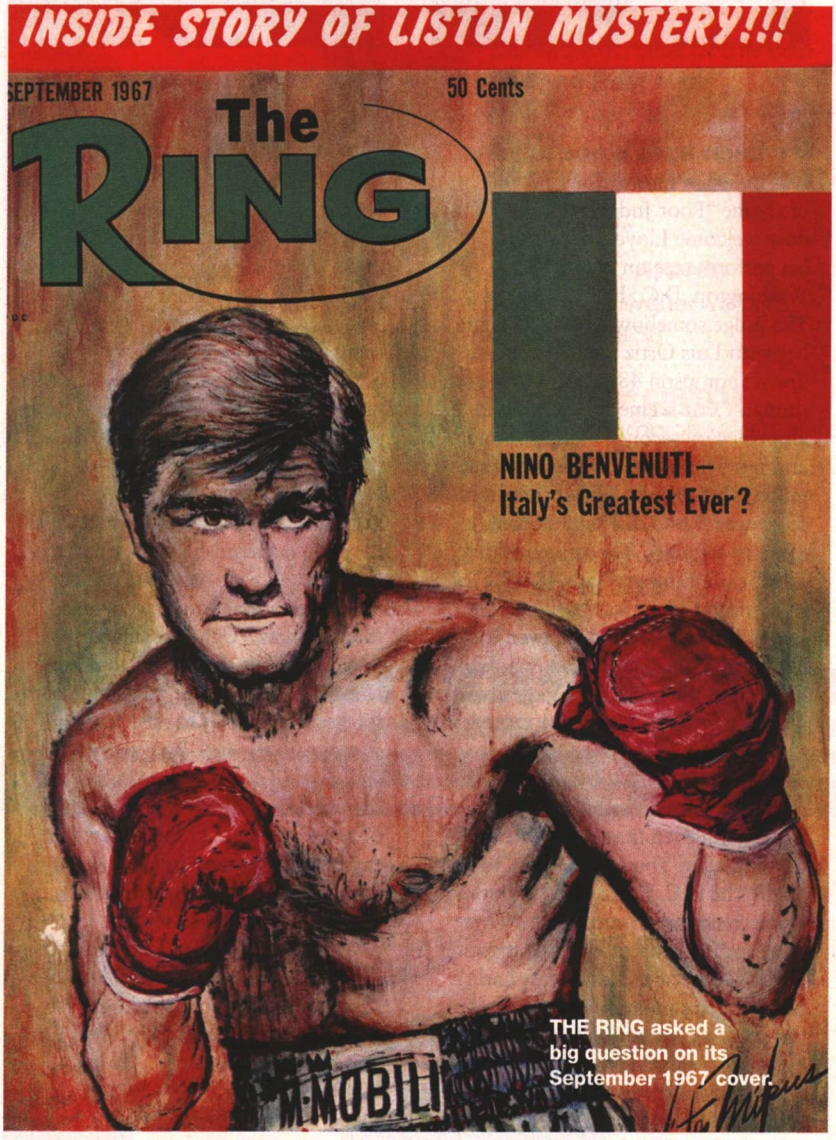
### THE PERCENTAGES:

| | |
|---|---|
| **65.70** | ALVAREZ BY KNOCKOUT |
| **17.28** | KHAN BY DECISION |
| **11.88** | ALVAREZ BY DECISION |
| **4.08** | KHAN BY KNOCKOUT |
| **1.06** | DRAW |

**NOTE:** 1,962 READERS VOTED

# NINO BENVENUTI

**82-7-1 (35 KOs)**




THE RING asked a big question on its September 1967 cover.

One thing that stands out about Nino Benvenuti is that he, not Cassius Clay, was named the outstanding boxer of the 1960 Olympics in Rome. That set the stage for one of the best careers a European has ever had.

Benvenuti took up boxing at 11, inspired by the legendary Duilio Loi. He had 120 fights in the unpaid ranks and lost only once, contentiously.

"For me it is a 120-0 record because of the nonsense of that loss," he recently told THE RING through a translator. "We were in Turkey fighting a Turkish boxer and … observers' opinions about the outcome were unanimous in my direction. So, finally, I can consider myself satisfied even with my 119-1 amateur record."

His amateur career culminated with five one-sided decisions and a gold medal in his home country. Nothing he did as a pro was more gratifying.

"That was the greatest victory of my life," he said. "The most meaningful, for that specific moment and so on for the following years. Representing Italy at the Olympics was what I dreamed about since I was a boy; consequentially, you can imagine what winning the gold medal in Rome has meant for me."

He continued: "I consider my Olympics win as my best overall. And do you know why? Because it lasts forever. I'm now a former middleweight champion of the world yet I'm still an Olympic gold medalist."

Benvenuti turned professional in early 1961 and won 56 contests in a row, collecting national and European titles along the way. That earned him a shot at fellow Italian Sandro Mazzinghi for the 154-pound world title in the summer of 1965. He brilliantly stopped his compatriot in six rounds to become WBA and WBC champion.

He defeated Mazzinghi in a rematch in December 1965, this time on points, before he surprisingly lost his titles to Ki-Soo Kim by a split decision in the Korean's home country. He had beaten Kim in the Olympics.

Annoyed at losing a fight he believed he'd won, Benvenuti moved up to middleweight. The handsome Italian won seven consecutive fights before making his American debut against RING, WBA and WBC middleweight champ Emile Griffith in the first of a classic three-fight series – all in New York – with a rival who ultimately would become a fellow Hall of Famer.

Both men went down early but Benvenuti emerged with a decision in THE RING's Fight of the Year for 1967. Griffith regained his titles by

a majority decision in the rematch later that year. And, in 1968, Benvenuti won the rubber match by a unanimous decision to recapture the belts.

Benvenuti successfully defended four times (plus three non-title bouts, one a loss to Dick Tiger) before meeting a then-unknown Argentine, Carlos Monzon. The fighters waged war for 11-plus rounds until the younger Monzon finally stopped the valiant Benvenuti in the 12th in what was again named THE RING's Fight of the Year for 1970.

Benvenuti retired after losing to Monzon a second time, in 1971, with an impressive record of 82-7-1 (35 knockouts). He was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1992.

Today, Benvenuti, 77, is married and has six children and two grandchildren. He is a successful businessman who remains involved in boxing as a commentator, working for Italian channel RAI.

He graciously agreed to speak to THE RING about the best he faced in 10 key categories.

## BEST JAB

**Juan Carlos Duran:** He had a very good jab. It was a frequent and accurate punch, though it didn't sting that much. In my representation of a real jab, it needs to be a more hurtful punch.

## BEST PUNCHER

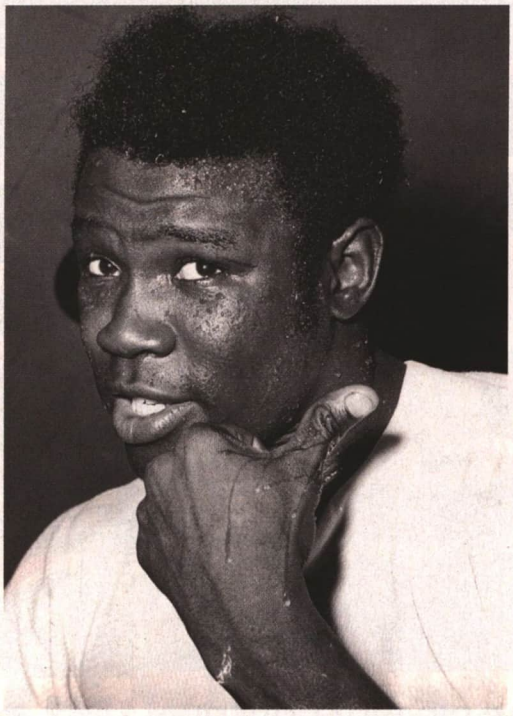
**Dick Tiger:** He was really very strong and powerful. Not only did he have power, he also used the right punching technique to land more effectively.

## FASTEST HANDS

**Emile Griffith:** It was Emile Griffith when he put together the punches in bunches. Very fast and well done combinations.

## FASTEST FEET

**Griffith:** Griffith, again. "Emilio" (Benvenuti's nickname for Griffith) had those skinny legs but they were very reactive and durable for 15 rounds. He also knew where to put his feet in the right place. And I'm talking either offensively or defensively.



**Benvenuti has great respect for the skills of rival Emile Griffith.**

## SMARTEST

**Griffith:** Talking about this particular quality, I'm always very interested in the adaptability of a boxer facing opponents of different skills or styles. That's a very important quality for a champion because it allows you to make the right adjustments. And I think Emile Griffith was the best I've faced in this aspect. You can see it also in his fights against Monzon, when he was past his prime.

## BEST CHIN

**Carlos Monzon:** I would say Monzon, of course. But unfortunately I could not test his skills as much as I wanted to (laughs). Bennie Briscoe, who I used to spar, was a tough and iron-chinned boxer.

## STRONGEST

**Monzon:** Well, it was Carlos Monzon. He threw punches with such determination, viciousness, and he really loved to hurt you also during sparring sessions, they told me. And he had the right physique to achieve it.

## BEST DEFENSE

**Monzon:** Actually Carlos Monzon was a very difficult boxer to hit. He had awkward hand movement, a bit like an octopus I would say, that inhibited you to find the right measures to do anything. Even when he was against the ropes he used his height to make you miss (by) flexing his body backward.

## BEST OVERALL SKILLS

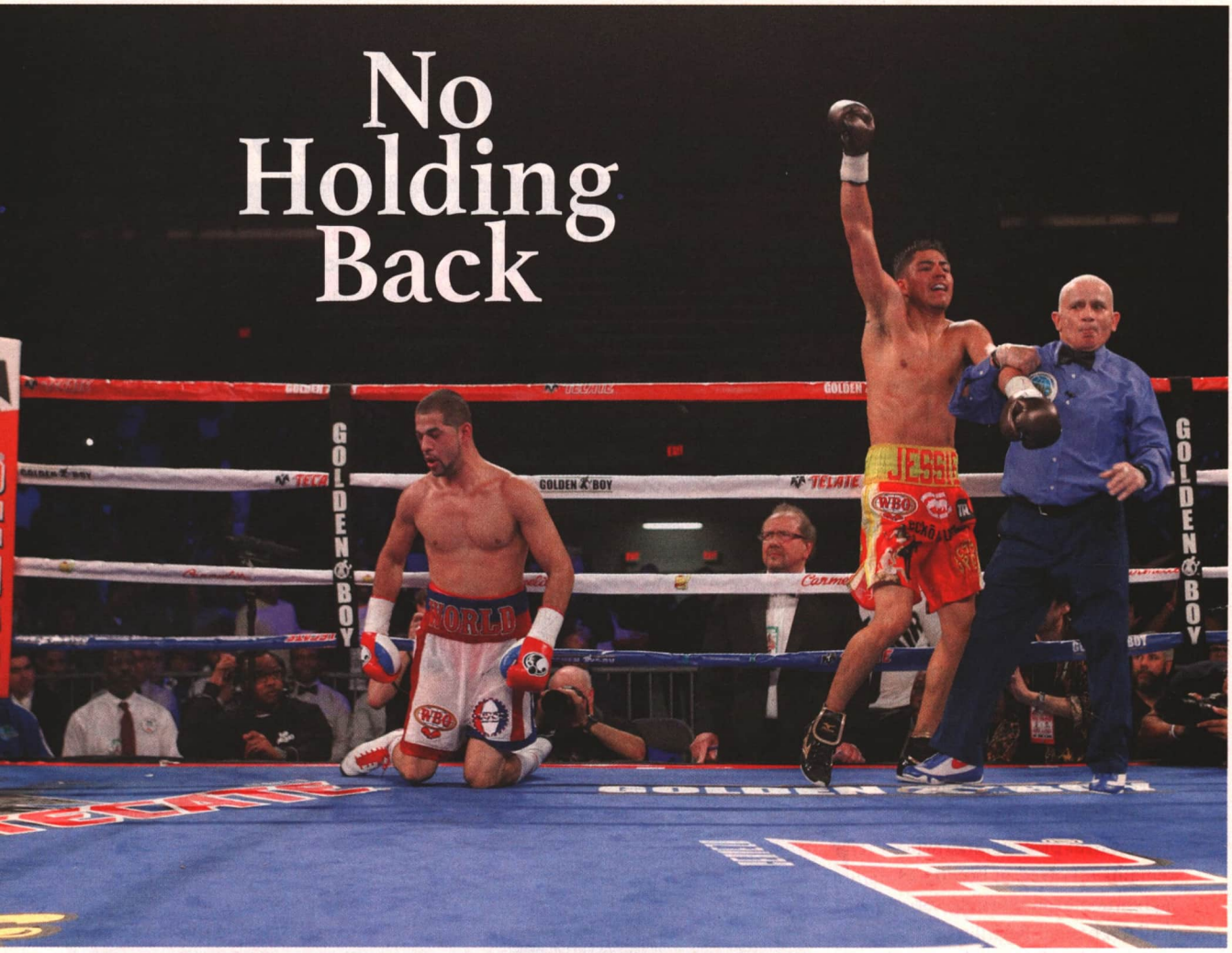
**Griffith:** I'm thinking (Luis) Rodriguez or Griffith, even if they were different boxers. You could feel Rodriguez's power also when he hit you on a shoulder but "Emilio" needed to catch you perfectly and precisely to be really effective. If they had been true middleweights, they would have been almost unbeatable. If I had to pick, I would say Griffith.

## BEST OVERALL FIGHTER

**Monzon:** Oh what a question, it's me! (laughs). Well no, to be fair, once I dreamed I fought Sugar Ray Robinson and I beat him ... on points, of course. I would say Monzon. RING

*Italian boxing correspondent Marco Bratusch helped coordinate and translate for this feature. THE RING appreciates his assistance.*

# No Holding Back




**JESSIE VARGAS** DID WHAT OVERLY CAUTIOUS **CARL FRAMPTON** AND **SCOTT QUIGG** FAILED TO DO – HE TURNED UP THE HEAT

**Jessie Vargas (right) pounded his way to victory over Sadam Ali.**

TOM HOGAN

Jessie Vargas and Sadam Ali aren't as accomplished as Carl Frampton and Scott Quigg. They aren't as famous. They don't earn as much money. But the welterweight contenders were willing to do something that the junior featherweight titleholders refused to try until much too late — fight with an intensity befitting the occasion.

Vargas and Ali needed the win. Vargas had owned a secondary world title at 140 but hadn't earned respect, especially with the two controversial decisions he'd picked up against Josesito Lopez and Khabib Allakhverdiev. He was coming off a fight with Timothy Bradley, hurting Bradley badly in the final seconds but otherwise losing on the scorecards. A second loss would be a significant setback. Ali had been a pro for seven years but was only now challenging for his first title.

Beyond the belt, they were competing for a place in a packed welterweight division and perhaps in main events in the future. That's why they stole the show on an undercard in Washington, D.C., where few of the fans had come to see them in particular. Vargas won the battle with a ninth-round technical knockout.

Frampton and Quigg were two of the best 122-pounders in the world, a pair of British boxers whose rivalry required a resolution. They fought a unification bout, putting their respective titles on the line in a big event in front of a raucous crowd. Except "fought" is too generous a description. They largely stood around, more wary than warrior for the first two-thirds of the fight, only competing in closer quarters when the bout was closer to its end.

They each landed about seven punches per round in total. Not a single power shot had landed from

either man through three rounds. At the fight's halfway point, Frampton had landed just nine power punches while Quigg had landed a mere three. It had taken long enough to get Frampton and Quigg to face each other. Now it was taking too long to get them to fight each other.

It was easy to understand why this was the case. Frampton and Quigg had risen toward the top with very good performances and very good paydays against opponents who weren't as good. They were too aware that this was a tougher challenge. Rather than rise to it, they lowered their risk.

They were already stars and didn't need to launch their careers. A lackadaisical victory wouldn't damage the winner. A dull defeat would be better than a decisive one. Frampton picked up the split decision and is probably dropping his two titles for a move to featherweight and a bout with Leo Santa Cruz. Quigg will likely vie for one of those vacant belts quite soon.

No wonder, then, that they didn't want to seize the opportunity if it meant getting caught. They didn't want to go down fighting if a firefight meant their career could go up in flames.

★

**Canelo Alvarez is facing Amir** Khan on pay-per-view because none of the other proposed fights for him would sell, at least not until Alvarez finally faces Gennady Golovkin. It's being sold on the spectacle. We'll either see Khan fail spectacularly or pull off the upset unexpectedly.

This isn't Manny Pacquiao vs. Oscar De La Hoya, when one of the best boxers in the world faced a weight-drained and otherwise finished larger opponent. Instead, this is a good boxer who hasn't even been among the best at welterweight but is now deciding to go up to 155 to challenge a fresh foe for the middleweight championship.

It's a brave move for Khan. Most of those who buy the show won't do so out of belief that he'll succeed. Instead, they'll watch the same way that fans of auto racing do — looking on as Khan tries to run circles around Canelo until he reaches the finish line, all while we wait for the big crash to come first.

**Canelo Alvarez vs. Amir Khan isn't comparable to Oscar De La Hoya vs. Manny Pacquiao.**

★

**Antonio Tarver is either trying** to play us for fools or he's a fool himself. It could be both.

"The Magic Man" is either delusional or trying to deceive us with an illusion. He claims that a positive test for performance enhancing drugs after last year's draw with Steve Cunningham is the result of a conspiracy against him.

The banned substance showed up in outside testing arranged by Lou DiBella, the promoter who was staging the show in partnership with Al Haymon for one of Haymon's Premier Boxing Champions broadcasts. Tarver pointed to the testing done by the state of New Jersey, which showed no banned substances, as proof he was clean. He called repeatedly for the positive sample to be tested for DNA, implying that it wasn't his.

But here's the thing: The lab that busted Tarver used something called carbon isotope ratio testing, which can catch the use of testosterone that came from external sources. The state testing didn't have that more-advanced measure. It only uses the testosterone-to-epitestosterone ratio as an indicator of probable foul play.

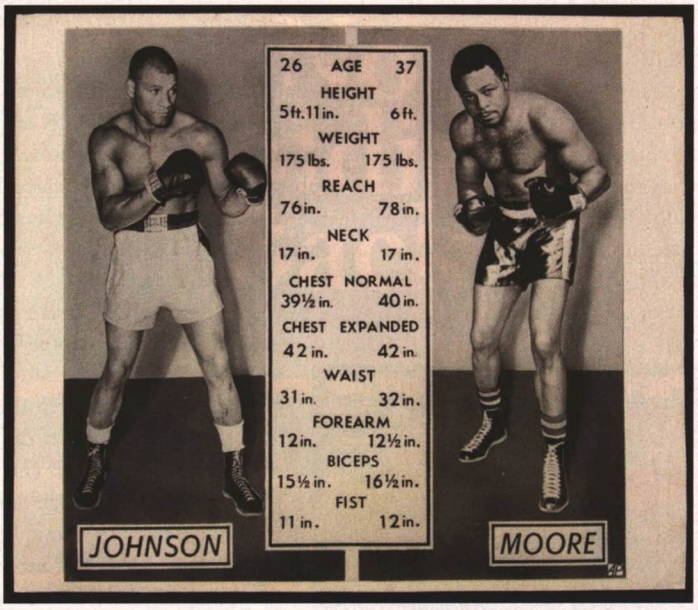
More and more athletes have learned to use smaller doses to reap the benefits of banned substances while still testing below the legal limit for the T:E ratio. Tarver was within the legal limit but the advanced testing showed the illegal steroids.

The conspiracy allegation is silly. Tarver has been with Haymon far longer than Cunningham. Haymon bailed Tarver out of jail when Tarver had been arrested for outstanding gambling debts. DiBella promotes neither man but is involved with many of Haymon's shows.

And we shouldn't gloss over the fact that this was the second time Tarver had come up positive. He'd also been punished after his 2012 draw with Lateef Kayode.

Tarver has a history of turning to tricks from up his sleeve. Now he is attempting to use hocus pocus to avoid suspension.

After all, he's a 47-year-old heavyweight who desperately needs money to cover more than $750,000 in child support. It's no surprise, then, that "The Magic Man" will say or do anything to postpone the inevitable vanishing act. RING




**Tale of the Tape was designed to provide the fighters' physical dimensions at a glance.**

# A Tired Tale

## 'TALE OF THE TAPE' HAS LONG BEEN A PART OF BOXING BUT IT NO LONGER CARRIES MUCH WEIGHT

Promoters have always wrestled with the challenge of how to build interest in a fight from the time it's announced until the opening bell. In days of old, the "tale of the tape" was part of that process.

Adam Pollack, who has written a series of excellent biographies about boxing's early gloved heavyweight champions, says that the Sept. 23, 1880, edition of the Boston Daily Globe listed John L. Sullivan's measurements as 6 feet tall, 43-inch chest, 16-inch bicep, 14-inch forearm, 26-inch thigh and 17-inch calf. Details like that became part of what would evolve into a national fascination with Sullivan.

On April 22, 1904, when Jack Johnson fought Sam McVey in San Francisco, local newspapers carried what eventually became the traditional tale of the tape (see graphic on Page 19). Five months later, on Sept. 16, 1904, the Seattle Daily Times listed similar measurements for Tommy Burns vs. Billy Woods.

Boxing historian and memorabilia dealer Craig Hamilton says that the tale of the tape became common for big fights in California in the first decade of the 20th century. By 1910, it was a regular part of newspaper reporting in advance of big fights.

"By the time Joe Louis was champion," Hamilton said, "8-by-10-inch photographs of the tale of the tape were distributed regularly to newspapers to use in their pre-fight stories."

A typical tale of the tape layout consisted of three columns. The center column, from top to bottom, read, "height, weight, reach, neck, chest normal, chest expanded, waist, biceps, forearm, thigh, calf, wrist, ankle." The champion's (or A-side fighter's) measurements were listed in the column to the left and the challenger's on the right.

Pollack said that early versions of the tale of the tape were often inaccurate and inconsistent from fight to fight.

So were later versions. In 1964, much was made of the fact that Sonny Liston's fist measured 15½ inches around (as opposed to the 12-inch fist of Cassius Clay). But when Liston fought Floyd Patterson seven months earlier, Sonny's fist had been listed as 14 inches.

The tale of the tape sprang from the misbegotten idea that physical measurements could quantify greatness in a fighter. Obviously, weight is significant in terms of the competitive nature of a fight. But other tale-of-the-tape measurements have always been of limited use.

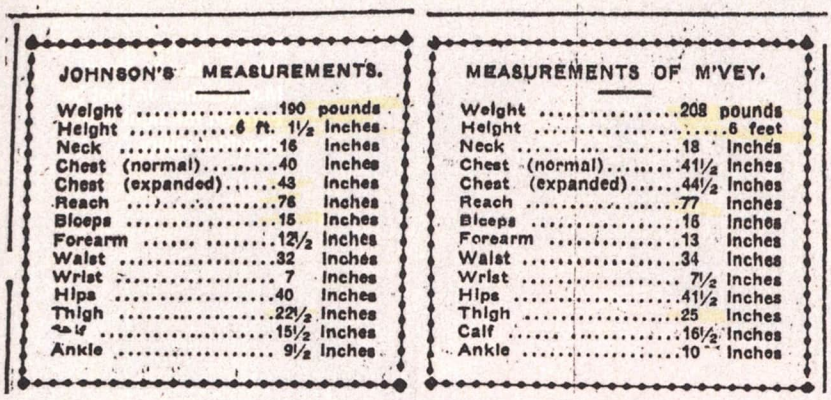
"Reach" actually measured wingspan and was dependent in part on how broad a fighter's back was. The size of a fighter's ankle was totally irrelevant.

More importantly, the tale of the tape didn't say a thing about a fighter's quickness, ring savvy, power, technique, heart or ability to take a punch.

Fights fans and the media began ignoring the tale of the tape in the 1970s. The "tale" still appears in the build-up to big fights from time to time but no one pays much attention to it.

★

**The Association of Boxing** Commissions (ABC) has been in existence since 1985 and currently has 68 state and Native American member commissions. Thirty-eight commissions from outside of the United States have joined as associate members but do not have voting rights.



| JOHNSON'S MEASUREMENTS. | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 190 pounds |
| Height | 6 ft. 1½ inches |
| Neck | 16 inches |
| Chest (normal) | 40 inches |
| Chest (expanded) | 43 inches |
| Reach | 76 inches |
| Biceps | 15 inches |
| Forearm | 12½ inches |
| Waist | 32 inches |
| Wrist | 7 inches |
| Hips | 40 inches |
| Thigh | 22½ inches |
| Calf | 15½ inches |
| Ankle | 9½ inches |

| MEASUREMENTS OF M'VEY. | |
|---|---|
| Weight | 208 pounds |
| Height | 6 feet |
| Neck | 18 inches |
| Chest (normal) | 41½ inches |
| Chest (expanded) | 44½ inches |
| Reach | 77 inches |
| Biceps | 16 inches |
| Forearm | 13 inches |
| Waist | 34 inches |
| Wrist | 7½ inches |
| Hips | 41½ inches |
| Thigh | 25 inches |
| Calf | 16½ inches |
| Ankle | 10 inches |

**Tale of the Tape was a staple when Jack Johnson fought Sam McVea, more than a hundred years ago.**

In July 2015, Mike Mazzulli (director of the Department of Athletic Regulation for the Mohegan Tribe) defeated Bernie Profato (director of the Ohio Athletic Commission) in an election to determine the new ABC president. Mazzulli succeeded Tim Lueckenhoff (executive director of the Missouri Office of Athletics), who had served six two-year terms as ABC president and was barred from seeking reelection last year by a recent term-limits initiative.

It was a contentious election with Lueckenhoff backing Profato. And the split widened after Mazzulli's victory when he named new chairpeople for each ABC committee.

Mazzulli's backers say that he's entitled to bring in a new team with a philosophy that matches his own. They also point to areas where the ABC can, and should, be doing a better job. His opponents claim that qualified chairpeople were removed from their positions simply because they supported Lueckenhoff and Profato.

Now the other shoe has dropped.

On Feb. 5, Lueckenhoff sent out a press release announcing formation of the Association of Combative Sports Commissions (ACSC), which he described as "a newly-formed non-profit organization composed of athletic commissions" that will "move in a new direction in working to protect the health, safety and welfare of combative sports contestants."

The press release further stated, "Any athletic commission or similar government entity [in the United States or elsewhere] is invited to be an ACSC member regardless of whether or not it is affiliated with [the ABC]. All athletic commissions will be granted full membership and accompanying full voting rights."

Lueckenhoff subsequently announced that the ACSC will hold its inaugural conference from July 9 through July 12 in New Orleans. That's three weeks before the ABC convenes in Las Vegas for its annual meeting.

In response, Pat Reid (executive director of the Edmonton Combative Sports Commission) sent an email to Lueckenhoff with a copy to everyone on the ABC distribution list.

Reid's email read in part, "My disappointment is that you were ABC president for six consecutive terms, and I would have thought you would have had more allegiance to the organization you headed up for such a long period of time. The optics do not look good. After twelve years, as soon as you lose an election, you appear to have gone off and formed a rival organization. It's unfortunate you could not find it in yourself to continue to work within the ABC rather than going in this direction. I don't understand why you wanted to destroy your legacy with the ABC rather than continue to contribute to its ongoing success."

Contacted by THE RING, Lueckenhoff said that Missouri would retain its membership in the ABC and that he hoped the ACSC would be more global in nature than the ABC has been.

Boxing needs two associations of state and Native American boxing commissions like it needs another world sanctioning body.

★

**Richie Giachetti, who was best-**known in boxing circles for training and managing Larry Holmes, died on Feb. 3 following a heart attack. He was 75.

Giachetti had more than a few rough edges. He once killed a man in a bar fight and was sometimes referred to as "Richie the Torch." Whether that designation was related to his ability to light a fire under his fighters or past employment as an arsonist was a matter of debate. Jack Newfield, in his 1995 biography of Don King, portrayed Giachetti in a particularly unflattering light.

I had a pleasant relationship with Giachetti. At least, I thought I did. So I was taken back when I went over to say hello at a Boxing Writers Association of America dinner about 20 years ago and Richie greeted me with, "I ought to punch you in the f---ing face."

"What are you talking about?"

"You know what I'm talking about. F--- you, you piece of s---."

"I have no idea what you're talking about."

"F--- you, Newfield."

"I'm not Jack Newfield. I'm Thomas Hauser."

"Oh, Jesus! I'm sorry. No, you're OK. Forget what I just said."

We chatted amiably for several minutes, at the end of which Giachetti told me, "You know, I'm a lot calmer now than I used to be. In the old days, I would have just punched you." RING

---

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book - "A Hurting Sport: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing" – was published by the University of Arkansas Press.

Manny Pacquiao revealed after he lost to Floyd Mayweather Jr. that he entered the fight with a shoulder injury.

# No More Excuses

## FIGHTERS WHO CITE INJURIES AFTER THEY LOSE ARE CHEATING THE WINNER, FANS AND THEMSELVES

This is one in a series of columns by future Hall of Famer Bernard Hopkins, who – through contributor Joseph Santoliquito – gives us his thoughts on various subjects important to every boxer and fan. **This issue: hiding behind an injury.**

**You never say anything.**

Injuries are always a part of boxing. You get them in training, you get them running. Or maybe you pull a muscle during sparring. You deal

with injuries. What I've been noticing lately is how injuries are now used as excuses for why fighters lose – and they always come out after the fact.

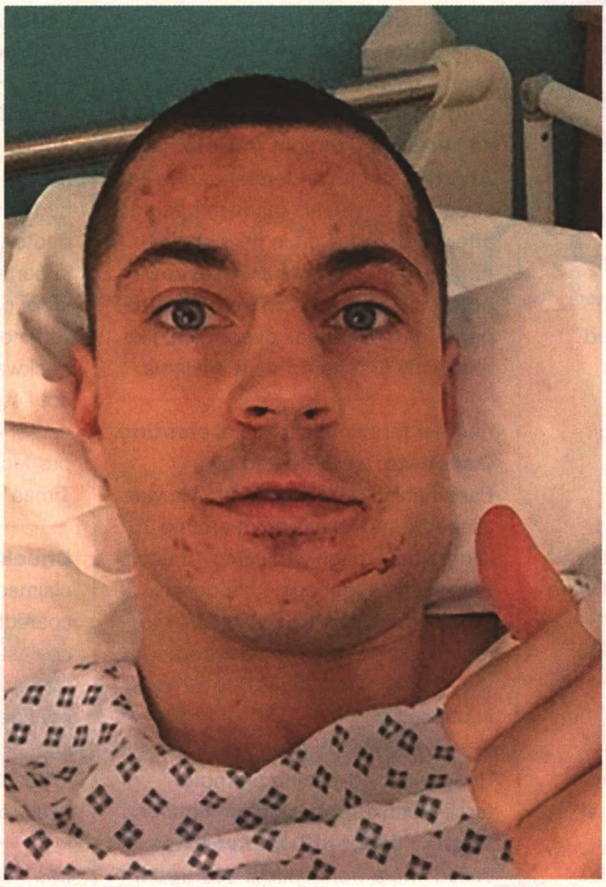
You have Manny Pacquiao coming out saying his shoulder was hurt after he lost to Floyd Mayweather. Look at the Carl Frampton-Scott Quigg fight, where Quigg said afterward that he broke his jaw. He did break his jaw but he broke it in the fourth round. Then why didn't he fight for the first seven rounds? Why did he come on late and try to make it a fight with a broken jaw? Why not just give Frampton the credit for winning?

I think injuries are a way out of owning up or manning up to what you are not – and that's a winner – instead of acting like you would have won if you weren't hurt. It shows disrespect to the man that beat you and, to a point, you disrespect yourself by not owning up to what happened. When I lost to Sergey Kovalev, there were no excuses. The man beat me. So after the fight at the press conference, that's what everyone heard. I wasn't about to take away from Kovalev's great victory.

It's like this generation of fighters tries to tell fans that what they saw was different from what actually happened in the ring. No it's not – you lost. It really does insult the fan's intelligence to tell them, after you lost, you would have won if you were 100 percent healthy going into the fight. Well, if you're hurt, postpone the fight until you are healthy enough to fight. It's really that simple. You have to be honest with yourself and to the fans, who are paying to see you. It's like you're cheating them, giving them some version that isn't really you. That's if you're really hurt.

A fighter might injure his shoulder in training. For these big fights, there is plenty of time to announce that. If I don't announce that my shoulder is hurt by the press conference before the weigh-in and I fight and lose, why would I think I'm going to receive sympathy for deceiving everyone? Then I come out and mention it after the fact? That pickpockets your lifeblood – the fans.

If you had an injury and didn't say anything about it until after the fight, who's going to believe you anyway? If you aren't really injured but something is nagging you, a sore elbow or shoulder, your hands hurt, this or that, and you use that as an excuse after you lose, that's even worse. It's best to die with the secret. Every fighter, every pro athlete goes through those strains. If you really care about who you are as a fighter, you say nothing. That mentality to be a man and suck it up when you lose hasn't been prevalent around the world of boxing I would say in the last 10, 15 years.

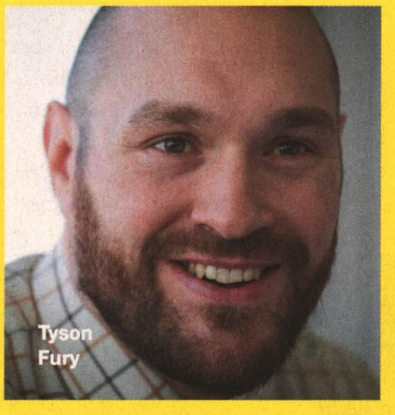


**Scott Quigg stole some of Carl Frampton's thunder when he announced he broke his jaw in their fight.**

I would never say that anyone who uses injuries as an excuse for why they lost is cowardly. Look, anyone who gets into that ring – I don't care how large or small, how old or young, it could be a club show or a pay-per-view in Las Vegas – they're brave people. It's why I respect anyone who puts on those gloves and fights. All fighters take risks.

The bottom line, though, is that as a fighter, you have to be true to yourself. I don't like losing. No true champion would ever be satisfied with losing. But Sugar Ray Robinson lost. Muhammad Ali lost. Jack Johnson and Marvin Hagler lost. You never heard afterward about how they weren't 100 percent going into the fight and made some injury excuse for why they lost. Old-school fighters never did that. Being accountable is something that we're missing today with young fighters.

Give credit to the man who beat you. It's why I gave credit to Sergey when he beat me. Did I like the outcome? Hell no. Who would? But I respected what happened and people can recognize honesty. Fans like that. They become long-lasting fans out of respect for not using any excuses for why you lost.


Tyson Fury

# BIG MOUTH

**Tyson Fury** has already covered misogyny ("I believe a woman's best place is in the kitchen and on her back.") and homophobic lunacy (three things need to be legalized before Satan shows up: homosexuality, abortion and pedophilia). Any sympathizers the heavyweight champion still had were tested again in February:

"I have eaten hedgehog, it's like nothing you've ever eaten before," he said while promoting an event in Birmingham, England.

A hedgehog, in case you aren't familiar, is a small, spiny mammal that sits somewhere near "baby panda" on the cuteness scale. It's not illegal to eat them in the U.K. but it is to domesticate them since they are considered endangered. Thus, Fury created more outrage when he claimed his brother breeds the little critters, along with bullfrogs, for the dinner table.

Fury likes his hedgehogs honey-baked, he said, which is a traditional dish in his Irish Traveller heritage. But that didn't quell any of the backlash. PETA publicly condemned his comments along with the British Hedgehog Preservation Society, a spokesperson for which said, "They need all the help they can get. To talk about cooking them for a snack doesn't help at all."

It really doesn't help anything, for that matter.

Former welterweight titleholder **Paul Williams**, who is paralyzed below the waist as a result of a motorcycle crash in May 2012, has returned to boxing as a trainer. His first charge, 22-year-old junior middleweight **Justin DeLoach** (nicknamed "The Chosen One"), was scheduled to face **Dillon Cook** on March 25 in Miami, Oklahoma. Williams' spinal cord was crushed just a week after he had signed to fight **Canelo Alvarez** and he understandably struggled to see his place in boxing afterward. He said his persistent former trainer, **George Peterson**, eventually convinced him to turn the page. "I'm scared all over again, like this is my first fight," said Williams.

Another former titleholder, **Celestino Caballero**, was arrested by Panamanian police in March. He was allegedly in possession of around 10 kilograms – roughly equal to 10 adult European hedgehogs – of cocaine. Caballero, who retired in late 2014, reportedly admitted to transporting the drug and now faces 8 to 12 years in prison.

Rapper-turned-boxing promoter-turned-bankrupt boxing promoter **Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson** was called into a Connecticut courtroom to explain how it was that a pauper like him could post photos on Instagram of himself surrounded by bricks of $100 bills, or of the stacks of money in his refrigerator, right next to the stacks of Kraft Singles. Jackson's lawyers defended the photos (which his creditors forwarded to the court) by saying 50 has an image to uphold. Jackson himself said it was "prop money."

Beloved Bronx native **Joe DeGuardia Sr.** died on March 8 at the age of 86. He was trained by **Angelo Dundee** and had a brief career in the '40s and '50s before migrating to the other side of the ropes. He founded the Morris Park Boxing Club and an organization called Better America Through Our Youth, through which he mentored countless young fighters, including eventual titleholders **Aaron Davis** and **Lou Del Valle**. DeGuardia's son, **Joe Jr.**, is the founder and president of Star Boxing, which promotes a stable that includes **Chris Algieri** and **Demetrius Andrade**.

Actor **Tony Burton**, who played Apollo Creed's trainer in six "Rocky" movies, died at the age of 78. He had lots of memorable trainer-jargon quotes but one from the first movie in particular could've saved Creed a lot of pain: "I don't want you messing with southpaws. They do everything backwards." Thankfully, Creed did not listen. Burton had a spectacular career of supporting roles in productions ranging from "Good Times" to "The Shining."

**Chuck Wepner**, who famously claimed to have inspired the Rocky character with his 15-round stand against **Muhammad Ali** in 1975, filed a lawsuit in February saying confidential information he discussed with producers of a new film called "The Bleeder" was stolen and is being used to make a "copycat" movie.

Los Angeles waiter **Gabriel Salvador** was a cause celebre in the lead-up to the **Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Manny Pacquiao** fight after it was reported that he brokered the peace that would finally lead to the war by introducing CBS Chairman **Les Moonves** to Pacquiao trainer **Freddie Roach**. Salvador got a nice weekend in Vegas for his role but said he was promised 2 percent of CBS' and Pacquiao's gross proceeds, which were well into nine figures. In February he filed a lawsuit to get his cut. Pacquiao's promoter, **Bob Arum**, dismissed the claim and said Salvador had nothing to do with making the fight. But even if he did, it's sort of like admitting you eat hedgehogs. Shouldn't we be suing *him*?

IceLink

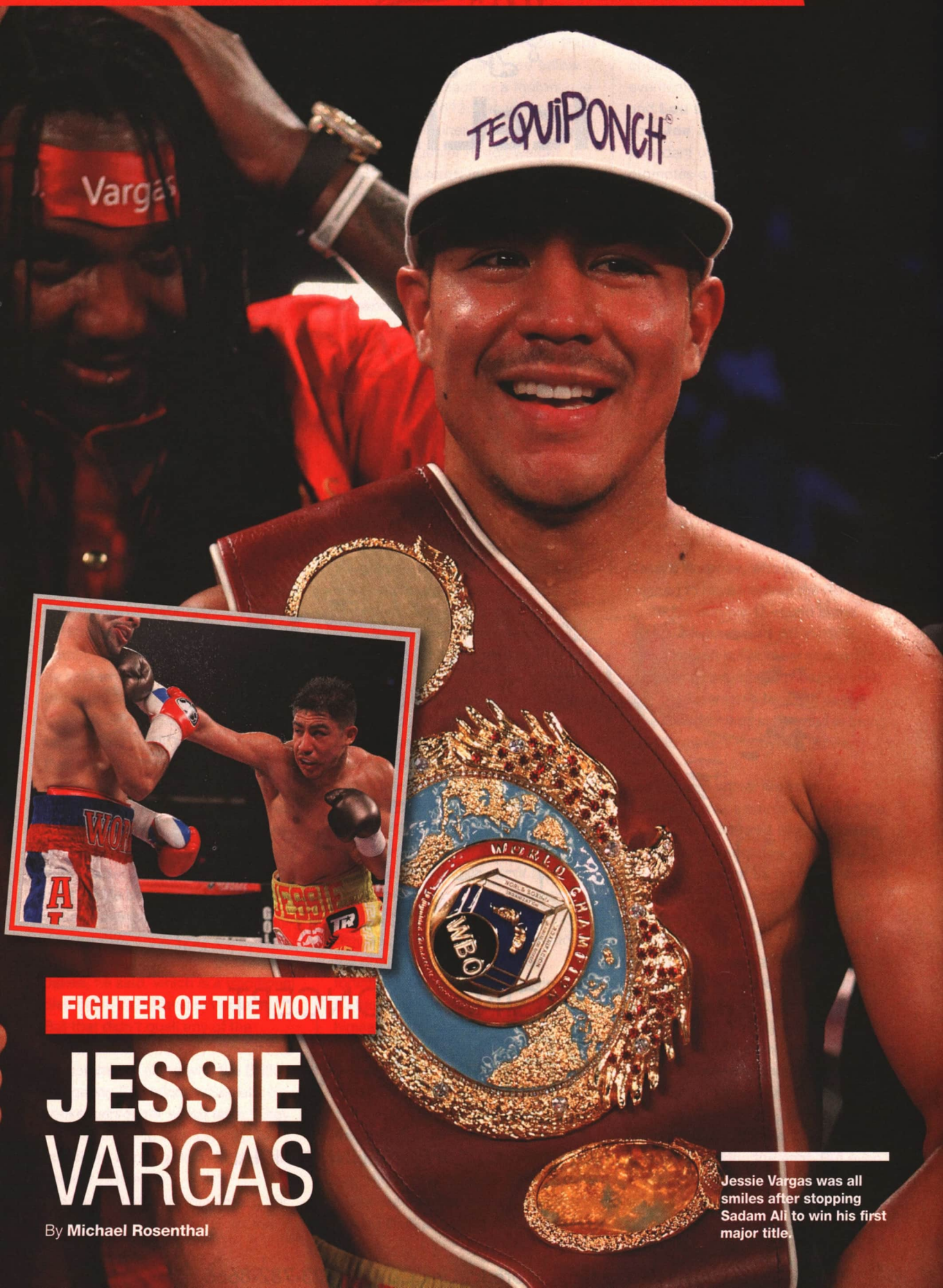
# BICYCLE BRACELETS

U.S. Patent
US D545,234 S

## AN ORIGINAL CONCEPT
# REBORN

#BRINGINGFUNTOLUXURY @ICELINKOFFICIAL

Available Only at Store.IceLink.Co | 1-323-782-8666






## FIGHTER OF THE MONTH

# JESSIE VARGAS

By **Michael Rosenthal**

Jessie Vargas was all smiles after stopping Sadam Ali to win his first major title.

**Jessie Vargas has long been** a solid contender but had failed to take that final step to truly elite status. That changed on March 5 in Washington, D.C.

Vargas not only recorded the most important victory of his eight-plus-year career when he stopped Sadam Ali at the DC Armory, he looked sensational doing it. The 26-year-old from Las Vegas isn't as good a technician or athlete as the slick Ali but Vargas proved to be the better fighter.

He kept the pressure on Ali even as he was taking punches, methodically breaking him down and setting him up for the kill. That came in two brutal rounds. Vargas sent Ali to the canvas with a booming overhand right late in the eighth. Ali survived but was wobbly and Vargas smelled blood, which didn't bode well for the loser.

Ali went down again from a right in the following round, got up but couldn't adequately defend himself. That was that. Vargas had won the WBO welterweight title – his first major belt – in the finest performance of his career.

Vargas had always been a spirited fighter but not this fierce. And where did that power come from? Our first glimpse of it came dramatically in his previous fight, when another huge right staggered Tim Bradley in the final seconds of a losing effort. The right that found Ali's chin looked an awful lot like the Bradley shot.

Vargas credits new trainer Dewey Cooper, who "showed me a new technique to develop more power. It was a move to turn my hips more and drive into the power."

Suddenly Vargas is a puncher, a ferocious, determined, confident puncher. Other welterweights, take note. RING

TOM HOGAN

***POUND FOR POUND:*** Shinsuke Yamanaka (No. 9 last month) defeated Liborio Solis by a unanimous decision but hit the deck twice on the way. That, along with eking out a split decision over Anselmo Moreno in his previous outing, was enough to trigger scrutiny of his standing. He was lowered to No. 10, switching places with Tim Bradley.

***HEAVYWEIGHTS:*** Lucas Browne (unrated last month) showed a lot of heart (and ink) by recovering from a knockdown to stop No. 8-rated Ruslan Chagaev in Russia. Browne entered the ratings at No. 10 while Chagaev dropped out.

***CRUISERWEIGHTS:*** Ola Afolabi again fell short in his fourth attempt at beating No. 4-rated Marco Huck and was replaced at No. 10 by Latvia's Mairis Breidis, who stopped Danie Venter (unrated) in two rounds.

***LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS:*** No change.

***SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS:*** Felix Sturm (unrated last month) entered at No. 9 after winning his rematch with Fedor Chudinov (No. 8 at the time) by a majority decision. The German's arrival knocked Chudinov down to No. 10, pushed Callum Smith from No. 9 to No. 8 and bumped Robert Stieglitz off the list.

***MIDDLEWEIGHTS:*** Avtandil Khurtsidze (unrated last month), a stocky 36-year-old from Georgia (the country), stopped the much younger and much taller Antoine Douglas (also unrated) in 10 punishing rounds. Khurtsidze replaced Frenchman Michel Soro at No. 10.

***JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS:*** No change.

***WELTERWEIGHTS:*** Jessie Vargas bounced back from his loss to Bradley in praiseworthy fashion by stopping Sadam Ali (No. 8 last month) in nine rounds. Vargas, who was rated No. 6 at 140 pounds, entered the welterweight ratings at No. 9. Ali dropped out.

***JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS:*** Vargas dropped out as a result of his move to 147. That lifted everyone previously below him up a notch and created a spot for Illinois product Adrian Granados at No. 10.

***LIGHTWEIGHTS:*** No change.

***JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS:*** No change.

***FEATHERWEIGHTS:*** No change.

***JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS:*** Carl Frampton (No. 3 last month) and Scott Quigg (No. 2 last month) switched places after their much-hyped (and afterward, much-griped) encounter ended with a split decision in Frampton's favor. Mexico's Hugo Ruiz replaced Julio Ceja at No. 10 after stopping his countryman in the first round of their rematch.

***BANTAMWEIGHTS:*** Solis was replaced at No. 10 by Ryo Matsumoto (unrated last month) after his unanimous-decision loss to Yamanaka. Matsumoto was then replaced by Zolani Tete (No. 4 junior bantamweight last month), who moved up from 115 pounds with a seventh-round knockout of unrated Jose Gonzalez.

***JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS:*** With Tete gone, the list migrated upward and the No. 10 spot was taken by the U.K.'s Khalid Yafai.

***FLYWEIGHTS:*** No change.

***JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS:*** Unrated Mexican Ganigan Lopez upset No. 3-rated titleholder Yu Kimura in Japan, winning by majority decision. Kimura tumbled to No. 9 while Lopez entered at No. 8 and pushed countryman Moises Fuentes (No. 10 last month) off the list.

***STRAWWEIGHTS:*** No change.

No. 2-rated 140-pounder Terence Crawford (left, taking care of Hank Lundy) could be on a collision course with No. 1 Viktor Postol.

**THE FIGURES UNDER THE FIGHTERS' NAMES INDICATE:** WEEKS IN THE RATINGS • COUNTRY • RECORD

## HEAVYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT UNLIMITED*

**C TYSON FURY**
213 • U.K. • 25-0-0 (18 KOs)

1. **WLADIMIR KLITSCHKO**
565 • Ukraine • 64-4-0 (53 KOs)
2. **ALEXANDER POVETKIN**
439 • Russia • 30-1-0 (22 KOs)
3. **DEONTAY WILDER**
121 • U.S. • 36-0-0 (35 KOs)
4. **KUBRAT PULEV**
231 • Bulgaria • 22-1-0 (12 KOs)
5. **LUIS ORTIZ**
13 • Cuba • 25-0-0 (22 KOs)
6. **BERMANE STIVERNE**
151 • Canada • 25-2-1 (21 KOs)
7. **BRYANT JENNINGS**
104 • U.S. • 19-2-0 (10 KOs)
8. **ANTHONY JOSHUA**
20 • U.K. • • 15-0-0 (15 KOs)
9. **CHARLES MARTIN**
4 • U.S. • 23-0-1 (21 KOs)
10. **LUCAS BROWNE**
2 • Australia • 24-0-0 (21 KOs)

## CRUISERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 200 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

1. **GRIGORY DROZD**
128 • Russia • 40-1-0 (28 KOs)
2. **DENIS LEBEDEV**
320 • Russia • 28-2-0 (21 KOs)
3. **KRZYSZTOF GLOWACKI**
31 • Poland • 25-0-0 (16 KOs)
4. **MARCO HUCK**
210 • Germany • 39-3-1 (27 KOs)
5. **ILUNGA MAKABU**
140 • Congo • 19-1-0 (18 KOs)
6. **FIRAT ARSLAN**
176 • Germany • 36-8-2 (22 KOs)
7. **YOURI KALENGA**
91 • Congo • 22-2-0 (15 KOs)
8. **OLEKSANDR USYK**
24 • Ukraine • 9-0-0 (9 KOs)
9. **VICTOR RAMIREZ**
19 • Argentina • 22-2-1 (17 KOs)
10. **MAIRIS BRIEDIS**
3 • Latvia • 19-0-0 (16 KOs)

## LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 175 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

1. **SERGEY KOVALEV**
165 • Russia • 29-0-1 (26 KOs)
2. **ADONIS STEVENSON**
145 • Canada • 27-1-0 (22 KOs)
3. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
511 • U.S. • 55-7-2 (32 KOs)
4. **ELEIDER ALVAREZ**
105 • Colombia • 19-0-0 (10 KOs)
5. **JUERGEN BRAEHMER**
194 • Germany • 48-2-0 (35 KOs)
6. **ISAAC CHILEMBA**
203 • Malawi • 24-3-2 (10 KOs)
7. **ANDRZEJ FONFARA**
96 • Poland • 28-3-0 (16 KOs)
8. **ARTUR BETERBIEV**
66 • Russia • 9-0-0 (9 KOs)
9. **VYACHESLAV SHABRANSKYY**
13 • Ukraine • 15-0-0 (12 KOs)
10. **JEAN PASCAL**
140 • Canada • 30-4-1 (17 KOs)

## SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 168 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

1. **ARTHUR ABRAHAM**
336 • Armenia • 44-4-0 (29 KOs)
2. **JAMES DEGALE**
145 • U.K. • 22-1-0 (14 KOs)
3. **BADOU JACK**
47 • Sweden • 20-1-1 (12 KOs)
4. **GILBERTO RAMIREZ**
88 • Mexico • 33-0-0 (24 KOs)
5. **ANDRE DIRRELL**
81 • U.S. • 24-2-0 (16 KOs)
6. **GEORGE GROVES**
223 • U.K. • 22-3-0 (17 KOs)
7. **ANTHONY DIRRELL**
83 • U.S. • 28-1-1 (22 KOs)
8. **CALLUM SMITH**
41 • U.K. • 18-0-0 (13 KOs)
9. **FELIX STURM**
4 • Germany • 40-5-3 (18 KOs)
10. **FEDOR CHUDINOV**
45 • Russia • 14-1-0 (10 KOs)

## MIDDLEWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 160 LBS*

**C CANELO ALVAREZ**
17 • Mexico • 46-1-1 (32 KOs)

**1. GENNADY GOLOVKIN**
223 • Kaz. • 34-0-0 (31 KOs)

**2. DANIEL JACOBS**
66 • U.S. • 31-1-0 (28 KOs)

**3. BILLY JOE SAUNDERS**
68 • U.K. • 23-0-0 (12 KOs)

**4. DAVID LEMIEUX**
42 • Canada • 34-3-0 (31 KOs)

**5. ANDY LEE**
66 • Ireland • 34-3-1 (24 KOs)

**6. PETER QUILLIN**
198 • U.S. • 32-1-1 (23 KOs)

**7. HASSAN N'DAM**
113 • Cameroon • 32-2-0 (18 KOs)

**8. CHRIS EUBANK JR.**
49 • U.K. • 21-1-0 (16 KOs)

**9. DANIEL GEALE**
353 • Australia • 31-4-0 (16 KOs)

**10. AVTANDIL KHURTSIDZE**
2 • Georgia • 32-2-2 (21 KOs)

## JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 154 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. ERISLANDY LARA**
246 • Cuba • 22-2-2 (13 KOs)

**2. AUSTIN TROUT**
198 • U.S. • 30-2-0 (17 KOs)

**3. MIGUEL COTTO**
17 • P.R. • 40-5-0 (33 KOs)

**4. JERMELL CHARLO**
123 • U.S. • 27-0-0 (12 KOs)

**5. JERMALL CHARLO**
92 • U.S. • 23-0-0 (18 KOs)

**6. DEMETRIUS ANDRADE**
22 • U.S. • 22-0-0 (15 KOs)

**7. VANES MARTIROSYAN**
328 • U.S. • 36-2-1 (21 KOs)

**8. JULIAN WILLIAMS**
66 • U.S. • 22-0-1 (14 KOs)

**9. LIAM SMITH**
27 • U.K. • 22-0-1 (12 KOs)

**10. CARLOS MOLINA**
246 • Mexico • 23-6-2 (7 KOs)

## WELTERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 147 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. KELL BROOK**
256 • U.K. • 35-0-0 (24 KOs)

**2. MANNY PACQUIAO**
332 • Phil. • 57-6-2 (38 KOs)

**3. AMIR KHAN**
98 • U.K. • 31-3-0 (19 KOs)

**4. TIM BRADLEY**
197 • U.S. • 33-1-1 (13 KOs)

**5. KEITH THURMAN**
158 • U.S. • 26-0-0 (22 KOs)

**6. SHAWN PORTER**
119 • U.S. • 26-1-1 (16 KOs)

**7. DANNY GARCIA**
33 • U.S. • 32-0-0 (18 KOs)

**8. ERROL SPENCE**
24 • U.S. • 19-0-0 (16 KOs)

**9. JESSIE VARGAS**
2 • U.S. • 27-1-0 (10 KOs)

**10. DMITRY MIKHAYLENKO**
11 • Russia • 21-0-0 (9 KOs)

## JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 140 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. VIKTOR POSTOL**
135 • Ukraine • 28-0-0 (12 KOs)

**2. TERENCE CRAWFORD**
48 • U.S. • 28-0-0 (20 KOs)

**3. RUSLAN PROVODNIKOV**
172 • Russia • 25-4-0 (18 KOs)

**4. LUCAS MATTHYSSE**
258 • Argentina • 37-4-0 (34 KOs)

**5. ADRIEN BRONER**
98 • U.S. • 31-2-0 (23 KOs)

**6. MAURICIO HERRERA**
60 • U.S. • 22-5-0 (7 KOs)

**7. JOSE BENAVIDEZ**
49 • U.S. • 24-0-0 (16 KOs)

**8. ANTONIO OROZCO**
24 • U.S. • 23-0-0 (15 KOs)

**9. EDUARD TROYANOVSKY**
16 • Russia • 23-0-0 (20 KOs)

**10. ADRIAN GRANADOS**
2 • U.S. • 17-4-2 (12 KOs)

## LIGHTWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 135 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. JORGE LINARES**
106 • Venezuela • 40-3-0 (27 KOs)

**2. DEJAN ZLATICANIN**
49 • Montenegro • 21-0-0 (14 KOs)

**3. SHARIF BOGERE**
72 • Uganda • 27-1-0 (19 KOs)

**4. RICHARD COMMEY**
42 • Ghana • 23-0-0 (21 KOs)

**5. TERRY FLANAGAN**
23 • U.K. • 30-0-0 (12 KOs)

**6. ANTHONY CROLLA**
21 • U.K. • 30-4-3 (12 KOs)

**7. RANCES BARTHELEMY**
13 • Cuba • 24-0-0 (13 KOs)

**8. DENIS SHAFIKOV**
49 • Russia • 36-2-1 (19 KOs)

**9. ARGENIS MENDEZ**
23 • Dom. Rep. • 23-3-1 (12 KOs)

**10. MIGUEL VAZQUEZ**
293 • Mexico • 35-5-0 (13 KOs)

## JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 130 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. TAKASHI UCHIYAMA**
324 • Japan • 24-0-1 (20 KOs)

**2. FRANCISCO VARGAS**
88 • Mexico • 23-0-1 (17 KOs)

**3. TAKASHI MIURA**
154 • Japan • 29-3-2 (22 KOs)

**4. ORLANDO SALIDO**
78 • Mexico • 43-13 -3 (30 KOs)

**5. ROMAN MARTINEZ**
393 • P.R. • 29-2-3 (17 KOs)

**6. JAVIER FORTUNA**
72 • Dom. Rep. • 29-0-1 (21 KOs)

**7. JOSE PEDRAZA**
61 • P.R. • 21-0-0 (12 KOs)

**8. BRYAN VASQUEZ**
65 • Costa Rica • 34-2-0 (18 KOs)

**9. SAUL RODRIGUEZ**
17 • U.S. • 19-0-1 (14 KOs)

**10. NICHOLAS WALTERS**
13 • Jamaica • 26-0-1 (21 KOs)

## FEATHERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 126 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. VASYL LOMACHENKO**
98 • Ukraine • 5-1-0 (3 KOs)

**2. GARY RUSSELL JR.**
51 • U.S. • 26-1-0 (15 KOs)

**3. LEO SANTA CRUZ**
29 • U.S. • 32-0-1 (18 KOs)

**4. LEE SELBY**
105 • U.K. • 22-1-0 (8 KOs)

**5. ABNER MARES**
150 • Mexico • 29-2-1 (15 KOs)

**6. SIMPIWE VETYEKA**
119 • S. Africa • 28-3-0 (17 KOs)

**7. JESUS CUELLAR**
75 • Argentina • 28-1-0 (21 KOs)

**8. EVGENY GRADOVICH**
159 • Russia • 21-1-1 (9 KOs)

**9. SATOSHI HOSONO**
13 • Japan • 30-2-1 (20 KOs)

**10. RONNY RIOS**
17 • U.S. • 25-1-0 (10 KOs)

## JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 122 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

**1. GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
280 • Cuba • 16-0-0 (10 KOs)

**2. CARL FRAMPTON**
182 • U.K. • 22-0-0 (14 KOs)

**3. SCOTT QUIGG**
173 • U.K. • 31-1-2 (23 KOs)

**4. NONITO DONAIRE**
51 • Phil. • 36-3-0 (23 KOs)

**5. GENESIS SERVANIA**
105 • Phil. • 27-0-0 (11 KOs)

**6. SHINGO WAKE**
69 • Japan • 20-4-2 (12 KOs)

**7. ALBERT PAGARA**
63 • Phil. • 26-0-0 (18 KOs)

**8. REY VARGAS**
66 • Mexico • 26-0-0 (21 KOs)

**9. JESSIE MAGDALENO**
40 • U.S. • 23-0-0 (17 KOs)

**10. HUGO RUIZ**
3 • Mexico • 36-3-0 (32 KOs)

# HOW OUR RATINGS ARE COMPILED

Championship vacancies can be filled in the following two ways: 1. THE RING'S Nos. 1 and 2 contenders fight one another. 2. If the Nos. 1 and 2 contenders choose not to fight one another and No. 1 fights No. 3, that matchup could be for the RING title if the Editorial Board deems No. 3 worthy.

A champion can lose his belt in six situations: 1. The Champion loses a fight in the weight class in which he is champion; 2. The Champion moves to another weight class; 3. The Champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months, although injuries and certain other unforeseen circumstances could be taken into consideration; 4. The Champion does not schedule a fight at his champion weight for 18 months (even if he fights at another weight); 5. The Champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years; 6. The Champion retires.

THE RING Editorial Board considers input from the Ratings Panel of boxing journalists from around the world and then decides collectively what changes will be made. That applies to both the pound-for-pound and divisional ratings.

*Records provided by boxrec.com*

# RING RATINGS

## BANTAMWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 118 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

1. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
228 • Japan • 25-0-2 (17 KOs)
2. **JUAN CARLOS PAYANO**
77 • Dom. Rep. • 17-0-0 (8 KOs)
3. **ANSELMO MORENO**
416 • Panama • 35-4-1 (12 KOs)
4. **JAMIE MCDONNELL**
150 • U.K. • 27-2-1 (12 KOs)
5. **TOMOKI KAMEDA**
137 • Japan • 31-2-0 (19 KOs)
6. **LEE HASKINS**
40 • U.K. • 32-3-0 (14 KOs)
7. **SURIYAN SOR RUNGVISAI**
35 • Thailand • 46-6-1 (23 KOs)
8. **PUNGLUANG SOR SINGYU**
26 • Thailand • 52-3-0 (35 KOs)
9. **MARLON TAPALES**
13 • Phil. • 28-2-0 (11 KOs)
10. **ZOLANI TETE**
1 • S. Africa • 23-3-0 (19 KOs)

## JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 115 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

1. **NAOYA INOUE**
63 • Japan • 9-0-0 (8 KOs)
2. **CARLOS CUADRAS**
201 • Mexico • 34-0-1 (26 KOs)
3. **SRISAKET SOR RUNGVISAI**
150 • Thailand • 38-4-1 (35 KOs)
4. **OMAR NARVAEZ**
306 • Argentina • 45-2-2 (24 KOs)
5. **MCJOE ARROYO**
92 • P.R. • 17-0-0 (8 KOs)
6. **KOHEI KONO**
22 • Japan • 31-8-1 (13 KOs)
7. **OLEYDONG SITHSAMERCHAI**
181 • Thailand • 58-1-1 (23 KOs)
8. **ARTHUR VILLANUEVA**
152 • Phil. • 28-1-0 (14 KOs)
9. **LUIS CONCEPCION**
26 • Panama • 34-4-0 (24 KOs)
10. **KHALID YAFAI**
1 • U.K. • 18-0-0 (12 KOs)

## FLYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 112 LBS*

**C ROMAN GONZALEZ**
123 • Nicaragua • 44-0-0 (38 KOs)

1. **JUAN FRANCISCO ESTRADA**
154 • Mexico • 33-2-0 (24 KOs)
2. **AMNAT RUENROENG**
97 • Thailand • 17-0-0 (5 KOs)
3. **KAZUTO IOKA**
78 • Japan • 19-1-0 (11 KOs)
4. **BRIAN VILORIA**
245 • U.S. • 36-5-0 (22 KOs)
5. **MORUTI MTHALANE**
105 • S. Africa • 32-2-0 (21 KOs)
6. **EDGAR SOSA**
201 • Mexico • 51-9-0 (30 KOs)
7. **JUAN CARLOS RETECO**
233 • Argentina • 36-3-0 (19 KOs)
8. **MCWILLIAMS ARROYO**
80 • P.R. • 16-2-0 (14 KOs)
9. **NAWAPHON POR CHOKCHAI**
38 • Thailand • 32-0-0 (25 KOs)
10. **JOHNRIEL CASIMERO**
23 • Phil. • 21-3-0 (13 KOs)

## JR. FLYWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 108 LBS*

**C DONNIE NIETES**
232 • Phil. • 37-1-4 (21 KOs)

1. **RYOICHI TAGUCHI**
66 • Japan • 23-2-1 (10 KOs)
2. **RANDY PETALCORIN**
97 • Phil. • 23-1-1 (18 KOs)
3. **PEDRO GUEVARA**
155 • Mexico • 26-2-1 (17 KOs)
4. **AKIRA YAEGASHI**
11 • Japan • 23-5-0 (12 KOs)
5. **JAVIER MENDOZA**
49 • Mexico • 24-3-1 (19 KOs)
6. **MILAN MELINDO**
70 • Phil. • 33-2-0 (12 KOs)
7. **ALBERTO ROSSEL**
151 • Peru • 34-9-0 (13 KOs)
8. **GANIGAN LOPEZ**
2 • Mexico • 27-6-0 (17 KOs)
9. **YU KIMURA**
16 • Japan • 18-3-1 (3 KOs)
10. **REY LORETO**
49 • Phil. • 20-13-0 (12 KOs)

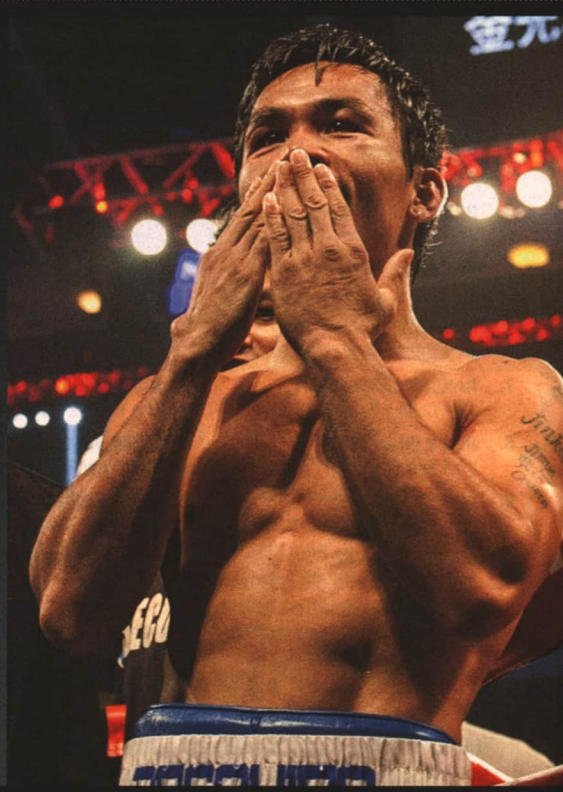
## STRAWWEIGHTS
*WEIGHT LIMIT: 105 LBS*

**C (VACANT)**

1. **HEKKIE BUDLER**
182 • S. Africa • 29-1-0 (9 KOs)
2. **WANHENG MENAYOTHIN**
248 • Thailand • 41-0-0 (16 KOs)
3. **KNOCKOUT CP FRESHMART**
76 • Thailand • 12-0-0 (6 KOs)
4. **KOSEI TANAKA**
72 • Japan • 6-0-0 (3 KOs)
5. **JOSE ARGUMEDO**
11 • Mexico • 16-3-1 (9 KOs)
6. **KATSUNARI TAKAYAMA**
155 • Japan • 30-8-0 (12 KOs)
7. **CHAO ZHONG XIONG**
70 • China • 26-6-1 (14 KOs)
8. **DENVER CUELLO**
70 • Phil. • 36-5-6 (24 KOs)
9. **CARLOS BUITRAGO**
179 • Nicaragua • 28-2-1 (16 KOs)
10. **JESUS SILVESTRE**
34 • Mexico • 31-6-0 (22 KOs)

# POUND FOR POUND

1. **ROMAN GONZALEZ**
93 • Nicaragua • 44-0-0 (38 KOs)
2. **SERGEY KOVALEV**
53 • Russia • 29-0-1 (26 KOs)
3. **GENNADY GOLOVKIN**
57 • Kazakhstan • 34-0-0 (31 KOs)
4. **ANDRE WARD**
27 • U.S. • 28-0-0 (15 KOs)
5. **GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX**
134 • Cuba • 16-0-0 (10 KOs)
6. **TERENCE CRAWFORD**
46 • U.S. • 28-0-0 (19 KOs)
7. **MANNY PACQUIAO**
642 • Philippines • 57-6-2 (38 KOs)
8. **CANELO ALVAREZ**
17 • Mexico • 46-1-1 (32 KOs)
9. **TIM BRADLEY**
16 • U.S. • 33-1-1 (13 KOs)
10. **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA**
44 • Japan • 25-0-2 (17 KOs)



**THE RING POLICY ON RATED BOXERS WHO TEST POSITIVE FOR PERFORMANCE-ENHANCING DRUGS**

THE RING will remove from its ratings any rated boxer — including a champion — if such boxer at some point undergoes drug testing (Olympic-style or otherwise) and that boxer tests positive for a performance-enhancing drug.

In the event that a boxer has undergone testing in which the boxer provides two samples ("A" and "B") and the boxer's "A" and subsequent "B" samples test positive for a performance-enhancing drug or if his "A" sample tests positive and he waives his right to have the "B" sample tested then the boxer shall immediately be removed from the ratings.

A boxer whose "A" sample tested positive and is awaiting the results of his "B" sample will not be allowed to fight for a championship or rise in the ratings.

A boxer who is removed because of a positive test will have the opportunity to earn his way back into the ratings after any suspension period is completed.

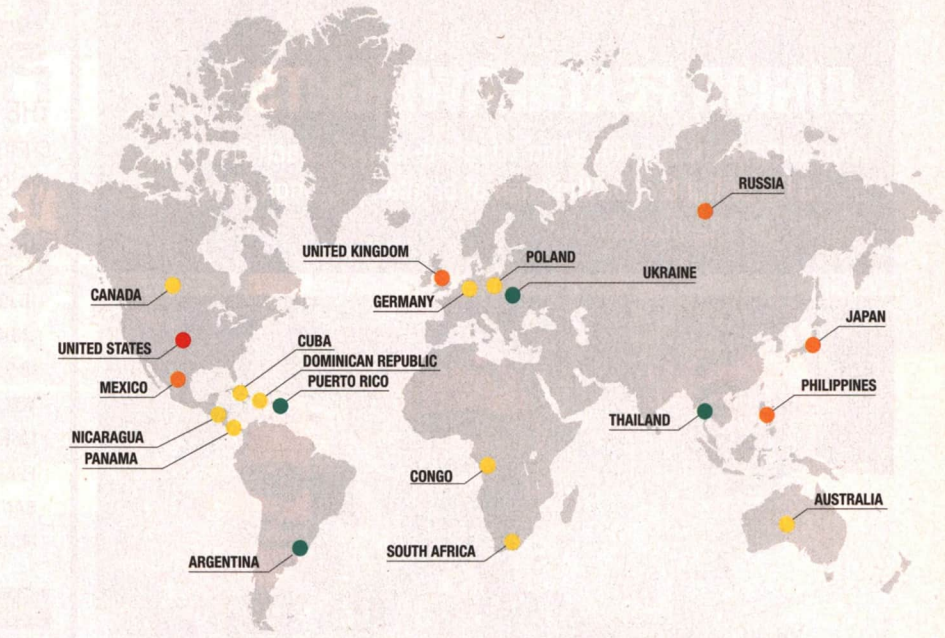
A boxer who is dropped also may be reinstated if the testing agency subsequently reverses its decision or a court of competent jurisdiction finds that the test result was invalid.

# RATED FIGHTERS BY COUNTRY

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ● | UNITED STATES | 32 | |
| ● | UNITED KINGDOM | 18 | |
| ● | MEXICO | 17 | |
| ● | JAPAN | 14 | |
| ● | PHILIPPINES | 12 | |
| ● | RUSSIA | 11 | ↓1 |
| ● | THAILAND | 8 | |
| ● | ARGENTINA | 5 | |
| ● | PUERTO RICO | 5 | |
| ● | UKRAINE | 5 | |
| ● | CANADA | 4 | |
| ● | CUBA | 4 | |
| ● | GERMANY | 4 | ↑1 |
| ● | SOUTH AFRICA | 4 | |
| ● | DOMINICAN REPUBLIC | 3 | |
| ● | AUSTRALIA | 2 | ↑1 |
| ● | CONGO | 2 | |
| ● | NICARAGUA | 2 | |
| ● | PANAMA | 2 | |
| ● | POLAND | 2 | |
| | ARMENIA | 1 | |
| | BULGARIA | 1 | |
| | CAMEROON | 1 | |
| | CHINA | 1 | |
| | COLOMBIA | 1 | |
| | COSTA RICA | 1 | |
| | GEORGIA | 1 | ↑1 |
| | GHANA | 1 | |
| | IRELAND | 1 | |
| | JAMAICA | 1 | |
| | KAZAKHSTAN | 1 | |
| | LATVIA | 1 | ↑1 |
| | MALAWI | 1 | |
| | MONTENEGRO | 1 | |
| | PERU | 1 | |
| | SWEDEN | 1 | |
| | UGANDA | 1 | |
| | VENEZUELA | 1 | ↓1 |

***Countries out (from last month):*** *France, Uzbekistan*

***Countries in:*** *Georgia, Latvia*




# WEST VS. EAST

The number of rated fighters in Europe are divided almost equally between Western Europe and Eastern Europe. Here's how it breaks down:

| DIVISION | WEST | EAST |
|---|---|---|
| HEAVYWEIGHTS | 2 | 3 |
| CRUISERWEIGHTS | 2 | 5 |
| LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS | 1 | 4 |
| SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS | 5 | 1 |
| MIDDLEWEIGHTS | 3 | 0 |
| JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS | 1 | 0 |
| WELTERWEIGHTS | 2 | 1 |
| JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS | 0 | 3 |
| LIGHTWEIGHTS | 2 | 2 |
| JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS | 0 | 0 |
| FEATHERWEIGHTS | 1 | 2 |
| JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS | 2 | 0 |
| BANTAMWEIGHTS | 2 | 0 |
| JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS | 1 | 0 |
| FLYWEIGHTS | 0 | 0 |
| JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS | 0 | 0 |
| STRAWWEIGHTS | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 24 | 21 |

**NOTE: Armenia, Georgia and Kazakhstan, countries that straddle Asia and Europe, were considered Asian nations for the purpose of this chart. Russia is included in Eastern Europe.**

# KISSING YOUR SISTER

Draws aren't all that common in boxing but the fighters rated by THE RING have a total of 90 draws in their collective careers, which is roughly one for every two fighters. Here are the rated fighters with multiple draws. (Ties are listed by weight.)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | **DENVER CUELLO,** | STRAWWEIGHT |
| 4 | **DONNIE NIETES,** | JUNIOR FLYWEIGHT |
| 3 | **FELIX STURM,** | SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT |
| 3 | **ANTHONY CROLLA,** | LIGHTWEIGHT |
| 3 | **ORLANDO SALIDO,** | JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT |
| 3 | **ROMAN MARTINEZ,** | JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT |
| 2 | **FIRAT ARSLAN,** | CRUISERWEIGHT |
| 2 | **BERNARD HOPKINS,** | LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT |
| 2 | **ISSAC CHILEMBA,** | LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT |
| 2 | **AVTANDIL KHURTSIDZE,** | MIDDLEWEIGHT |
| 2 | **ERISLANDY LARA,** | JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT |
| 2 | **CARLOS MOLINA,** | JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT |
| 2 | **MANNY PACQUIAO,** | WELTERWEIGHT |
| 2 | **ADRIAN GRANADOS,** | JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT |
| 2 | **TAKASHI MIURA,** | JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT |
| 2 | **SCOTT QUIGG,** | JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT |
| 2 | **SHINGO WAKE,** | JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT |
| 2 | **SHINSUKE YAMANAKA,** | BANTAMWEIGHT |
| 2 | **OMAR NARVAEZ,** | JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT |

FOCUS ON . . .

# JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS

A breakdown of THE RING Top 10 in one division each month, plus a list of fighters on the cusp of breaking through. This month: the 122-pounders.

Guillermo Rigondeaux's troubles continued when he couldn't get a visa to fight in the U.K. in March.

**MOST WEEKS RATED:** GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX **280**

**FEWEST WEEKS RATED:** HUGO RUIZ **3**

**OLDEST:** RIGONDEAUX **35**

**YOUNGEST:** ALBERT PAGARA **22**

**MOST FIGHTS:** NONITO DONAIRE, RUIZ **39**

**FEWEST FIGHTS:** RIGONDEAUX **16**

**HIGHEST WINNING PERCENTAGE:** CARL FRAMPTON, JESSIE MAGDALENO, PAGARA, RIGONDEAUX, GENESIS SERVANIA, REY VARGAS **100 PERCENT**

**LOWEST WINNING PERCENTAGE:** SHINGO WAKE **76.9 PERCENT**

**MOST KOS:** RUIZ **32**

**FEWEST KOS:** RIGONDEAUX **10**

**LONGEST CURRENT WINNING STREAK:** SERVANIA **27 FIGHTS**

**ON THE POUND-FOR-POUND LIST:** RIGONDEAUX **NO. 5**

**TITLEHOLDERS IN THE TOP 10:** DONAIRE **(WBO)**, FRAMPTON **(IBF, WBA)**, RUIZ **(WBC)**

**ON THE CUSP (IN ALPHABETICAL ORDER):** MANUEL AVILA, RANDY CABALLERO, JULIO CEJA, DIEGO DE LA HOYA, MOISES FLORES

## OLD SCHOOL 8

THE RING staff members' current champions in the original eight weight classes.

**MICHAEL ROSENTHAL** RING MAGAZINE EDITOR

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** TYSON FURY
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** SERGEY KOVALEV
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** GENNADY GOLOVKIN
**WELTERWEIGHT:** KELL BROOK
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
**FLYWEIGHT:** ROMAN GONZALEZ

**DOUG FISCHER** RINGTV.COM EDITOR

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** TYSON FURY
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** SERGEY KOVALEV
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** GENNADY GOLOVKIN
**WELTERWEIGHT:** KELL BROOK
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** VASYL LOMACHENKO
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
**FLYWEIGHT:** ROMAN GONZALEZ

**BRIAN HARTY** RING MAGAZINE MANAGING EDITOR

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** TYSON FURY
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** SERGEY KOVALEV
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** GENNADY GOLOVKIN
**WELTERWEIGHT:** KELL BROOK
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** VASYL LOMACHENKO
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** NAOYA INOUE
**FLYWEIGHT:** ROMAN GONZALEZ

**MITCH ABRAMSON** STAFF WRITER

**HEAVYWEIGHT:** TYSON FURY
**LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT:** SERGEY KOVALEV
**MIDDLEWEIGHT:** GENNADY GOLOVKIN
**WELTERWEIGHT:** KELL BROOK
**LIGHTWEIGHT:** TAKASHI UCHIYAMA
**FEATHERWEIGHT:** GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX
**BANTAMWEIGHT:** SHINSUKE YAMANAKA
**FLYWEIGHT:** ROMAN GONZALEZ

***Note:*** *This is how the weights break down: Heavyweight includes cruiserweight, light heavyweight includes super middleweight, all divisions middleweight through flyweight include the "junior" versions, and flyweight also includes strawweight.*

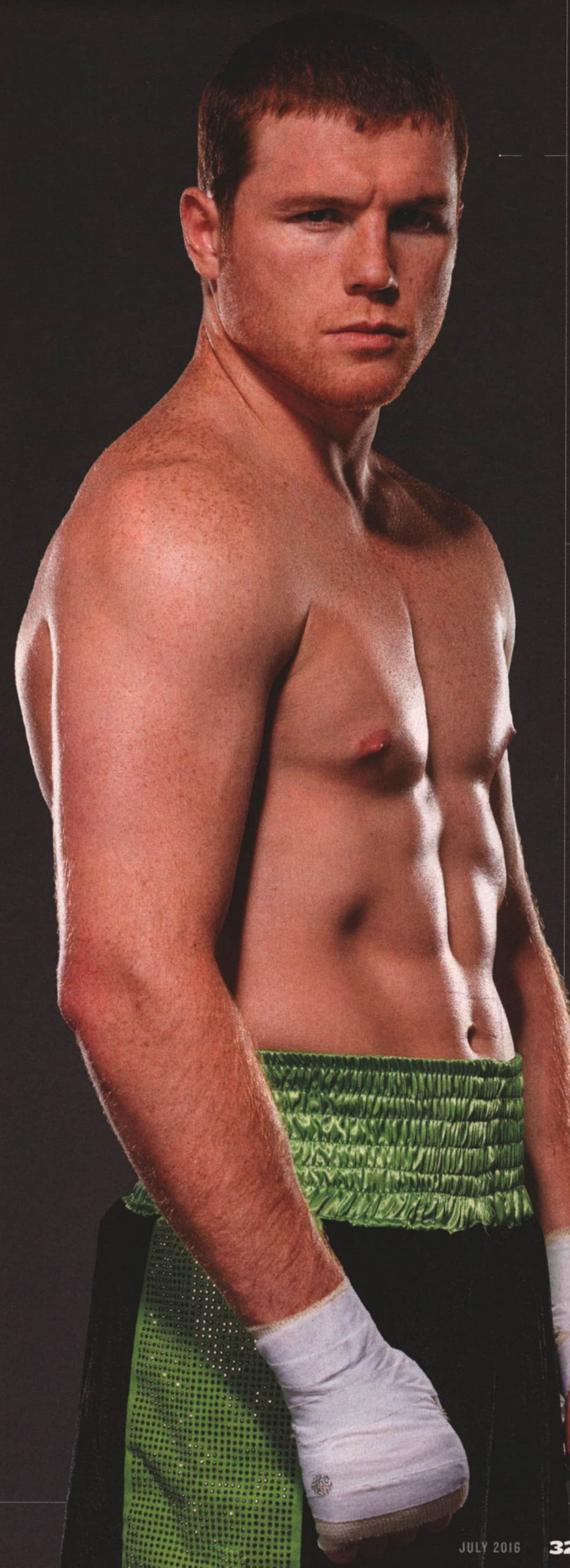
Corona Extra

BOXING

ACHIEVING GREATNESS *takes* SOMETHING EXTRA.

PROUD SPONSOR OF GOLDEN BOY

Imported by Crown Imports LLC. Chicago, IL 60603. Relax responsibly.



# THE BUILDING OF CANELO

## GOLDEN BOY MATCHMAKER ERIC GOMEZ AND CO. HAVE NAVIGATED DELICATELY BETWEEN RISK AND REWARD TO CREATE THE BURGEONING FACE OF BOXING

By **Ron Borges**

With the retirement of Floyd Mayweather Jr. and the slow fading away of Manny Pacquiao, boxing has become a sport without a face. When one considers that it often also operates without a brain, this is a vacuum that needs to be filled quickly.

One of the most likely candidates is Mexican sensation Saul "Canelo" Alvarez, a fighter who has been carefully introduced into the American marketplace by Golden Boy Promotions with an eye toward what its president and chief matchmaker, Eric Gomez, calls "measured risk." There is always risk in boxing but many times it is limited and well controlled. That's the kind of risk that has made insurance companies massively profitable, abiding by a philosophy that in theory it might drop to below freezing in central California, destroy the crops and cost a fortune in payouts, but we'll take our chances. Measured risk, you see.

Alvarez will take such a risk May 7 when he steps into the ring to defend his RING and WBC middleweight titles against two-time junior welterweight titleholder Amir Khan. Because of Khan's speed and agility, he is an opponent against whom one may indeed encounter some danger. This is especially true for Alvarez because the one thing that seems to addle him is speed, both hand and foot. Khan has both and thus has convinced many that he must be respected,

Canelo Alvarez has met almost every challenge in his career.

if not exactly feared, by Alvarez and those around him.

Gomez, who along with his boss and boyhood friend, Oscar De La Hoya, made the match, doesn't disagree. He insists that risk comes with the territory if the aim is to make competitive fights fans want to see. But, again, there is risk and then there is "measured risk," which is how he and De La Hoya saw the Khan fight while it was being debated internally.

"Oscar is modeling his company and developing Canelo after his own career," Gomez explained. "One thing he believes is that good fighters will perform better when their opponent is better. So you take measured risks.

"When you're developing a fighter you get them to a certain point and then you have to turn them loose to sink or swim. We know what Canelo means to our company. He's our franchise. But Oscar believes in fights where you know your guy is in position to win but it will be tough. That's the way we looked at the Khan fight.

"You look at this speed and you know speed is what gives Canelo the most problems. Khan has that and he's bigger than Floyd Mayweather, who beat Canelo with speed. So it's a risk. Some people don't see that but it's a risk. I wanted the fight but I have questions in my own head about the speed and how Canelo will handle it."

To a degree that may be promotional company talk to spur interest in what Las Vegas sees as a fight with strong odds favoring Alvarez, but the larger point is this: There is a thin line between risk and disaster when developing a fighter. The former is not only acceptable but at times necessary if one hopes to turn a boxer into the face of his sport. The other, however, can fracture his face and his future. This is the thin line Gomez and Golden Boy had to walk to get to the point where, if things go

**Alvarez made it clear to his handlers that he wanted to fight Erislandy Lara (right).**

# PIVOTAL MOMENTS

Key fights in the career of Canelo Alvarez.

**Oct. 29, 2005 –** Makes his pro debut at 15 years old, stopping Abraham Gonzalez in his home state of Jalisco.

**Jan. 20, 2006 –** Narrowly outpointed a young fighter making his pro debut. No shame there: It was future titleholder Miguel Vazquez, whom Alvarez outpointed again two years later.

**Oct. 24, 2008 –** Made his U.S. debut against a solid foe in Larry Mosley in Cabazon, California. Won a unanimous decision.

**Sept. 18, 2010 –** First fight against a former world titleholder, Carlos Baldomir, who was stopped in six rounds.

**March 5, 2011 –** Easily outpointed Matthew Hatton to win his first major title, the vacant WBC junior middleweight version.

**May 5, 2012 –** First test against a future Hall of Famer, an aging Shane Mosley, who lost a one-sided decision.

**April 20, 2013 –** Arguably Alvarez's first fight against a prime elite opponent, Austin Trout. Alvarez won a one-sided decision.

**Sept. 14, 2013 –** Outclassed by Floyd Mayweather Jr. in by far the biggest test of the young fighter's career.

**July 12, 2014 –** Alvarez demanded the difficult matchup against crafty Erislandy Lara and narrowly emerged victorious.

**Nov. 21, 2015 –** Defeated veteran Miguel Cotto by a unanimous decision to win the RING and WBC middleweight titles.

**May 7, 2016 –** Faces the smaller, but quick-handed Amir Khan, the first fight at the new T-Mobile Arena in Las Vegas.

JOSH HEDGES

as expected, Alvarez's next fight could be a huge pay-per-view showdown with undefeated middleweight champion Gennady Golovkin.

That is a fight with a lot of risk, but some risks cannot be avoided because the reward is such that there is no choice. Fights like Tunney-Dempsey, Louis-Schmeling, Hagler-Hearns, Pacquiao-Marquez, Tyson-Holyfield and the many others that live on long after being contested are the lifeblood of the sport. Yet they are also the matches that put a boxer at great risk and hence are not something promoters want to constantly have their fighter facing.

The balance between too little risk and too much is one Gomez and Golden Boy have been striving for ever since they first promoted Alvarez on Oct. 24, 2008, at the Morongo Casino in Southern California against Larry Mosley. Mosley was a decorated amateur and a fleet-footed, hard-hitting professional. He was a test Alvarez passed, although he had some early problems with Mosley's movement.

The truer test came three fights later in Zapopan, Mexico, when Gomez matched him against an undefeated guy named Euri Gonzalez. Gomez had worked with Gonzalez previously so he knew what he was putting young Alvarez in with: a tough guy with fast hands. That night told the story. At least the early chapters.

"Canelo got hit with a big right hand along the ropes about halfway through the fight," Gomez recalled. "He got hurt but he came roaring back and he stopped him late (in the 11th round of a minor title fight). We thought then we had something special. When he got hit with that right hand he reacted! He sold out the arena and he reacted to trouble the way you want your guy to react. He was raw but we thought we had something special."

Turns out they were right. Within 18 months he'd beaten former world champion Carlos Baldomir and in just over two years won the vacant WBC junior middleweight title by easily outpointing Matthew Hatton. By that time, the red-headed Alvarez had become a phenomenon in Mexico but remained relatively underappreciated in the U.S.

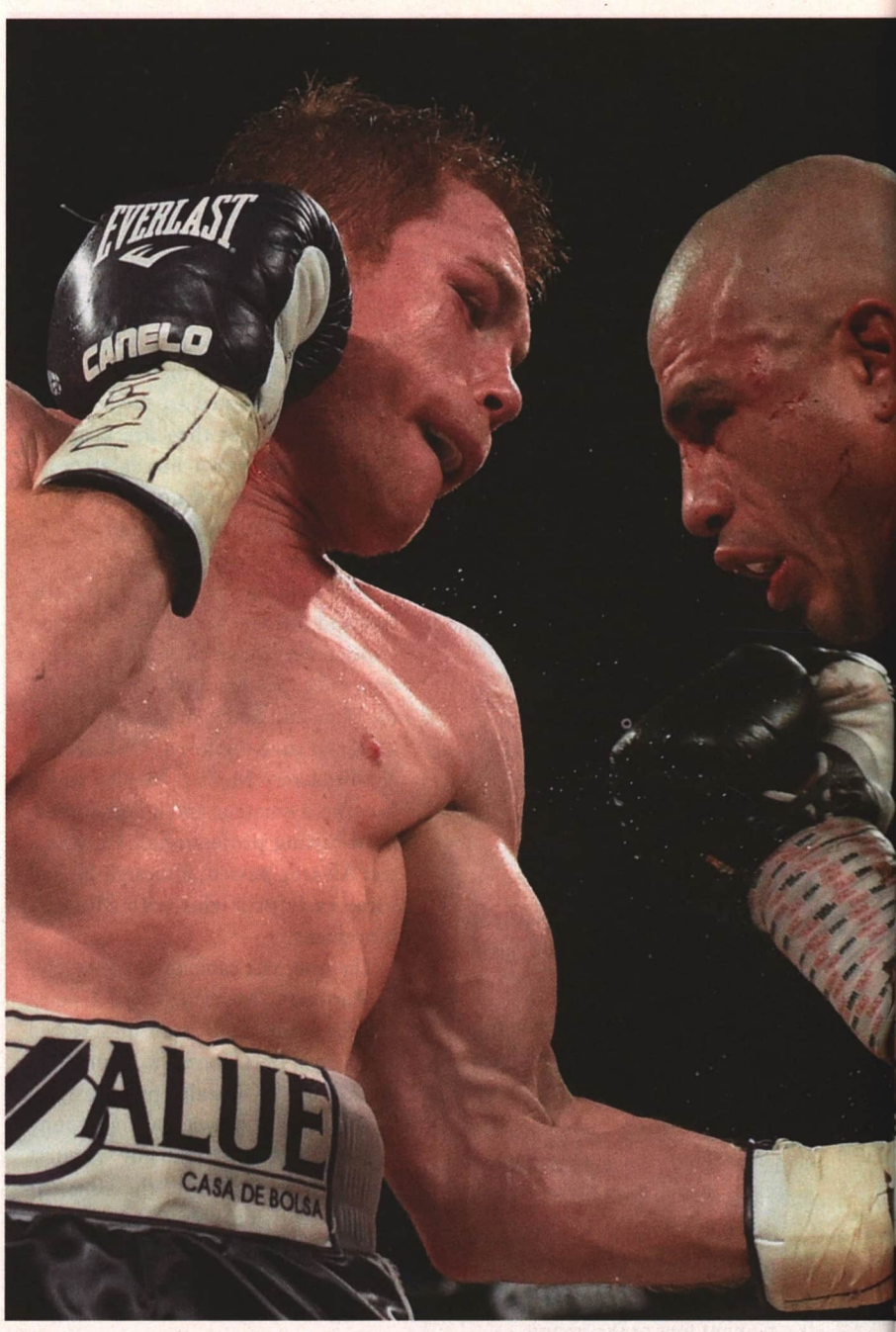
His reputation in the U.S. was built in traditional fashion, facing somewhat faded fighters with marketable reputations like Lovemore Ndou, Kermit Cintron and then the classic test against a once-great former champion who was a managed risk but a considerable one. That former champion was Shane Mosley, smaller and fraying around the edges but still someone who could expose a young fighter's flaws if he was not ready to meet the challenge.

Gomez understood this but the risk seemed manageable and Alvarez won easily. A less manageable risk was taken a year later when he stepped in against Austin Trout, the undefeated former titleholder.

One matchmaker didn't want anything to do with it.

Don Chargin promoted his first fight on Sept. 3, 1951, and his latest one about 20 minutes ago, so it is safe to say the 88-year-old Hall of Fame promoter and matchmaker understands the dark art and delicate balancing act of building a young fighter into a ticket-selling phenomenon. It is something he has done for decades, so it is with some admiration that he has watched his latest promotional proteges, De La Hoya and Gomez, build Alvarez into a phenomenon on the cusp of becoming the face of the sport. But he also understood that with a superior talent like Alvarez comes some unique problems, not the least being the fighter himself.

"Canelo is a little different than most guys," said Chargin. "Most guys you bring along and they want easier fights but Canelo really wanted to fight the best. It was Canelo who insisted on the Mayweather fight when Golden Boy wanted to wait, which would have been right from a promoter's standpoint. He's the one who wanted Trout when nobody wanted to fight Trout.




"With a guy like that you have to be careful. Your job sometimes is to protect a guy from himself. At the same time, if he really wants the fight, you can't keep saying 'not now' because you run the risk he starts doubting your faith in him.

"I would have hesitated with a guy like Austin Trout and (Erislandy) Lara. Canelo thought he could beat Trout but nobody wanted to fight him. He talked Golden Boy into it. That fight was more dangerous than Mayweather. If you lose to Mayweather, he probably doesn't hurt you and so you lost a decision to the guy. Everybody loses a decision to the guy. But if you lose to someone like Trout or Lara, now you've got a problem."

Especially if you made the match. Memory fades after a defeat. Fighters forget whose idea it was. That was the risk with Trout, whom Canelo easily outpointed. And again with Lara, whom he faced two fights after the Mayweather loss against the wishes of Gomez.

"I felt Canelo was ready for the Floyd fight," Gomez admitted. "I thought he was too big and too strong. I thought he would overwhelm him. Oscar felt he wasn't ready yet. He thought he was too young but their coaches convinced Oscar, and I agreed. Ultimately we were wrong and Oscar was right but my mindset was Floyd was not going to be able to hurt Canelo. The only way he could win was by running.

"So you look at the risk and you see it but the reward there was huge and the risk was not. So we took it. Canelo lost a majority decision but came out of that fight bigger than ever. More popular in Mexico and now popular in the U.S. too."

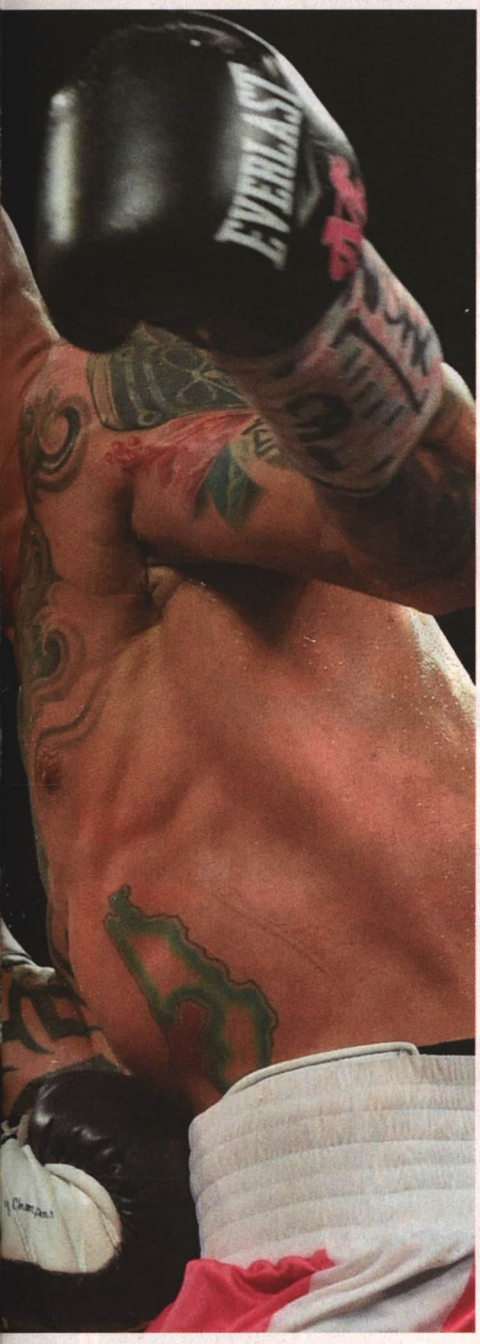
After that defeat Gomez's job was different. Although Alvarez left the ring believing he had not lost a fight because one never broke out, his next opponent was critical. Golden Boy wanted not only to see him back on a winning track but winning in a fashion that would grow his new U.S. fan base.

"That's why we went with (Alfredo) Angulo," Gomez said. "We wanted a guy who didn't move. We wanted a guy who would stay in front of him and come forward. Canelo fought great. But then he wanted Lara. There was no way I wanted that fight. He was another mover. That fight was made by Canelo.

"He told us he didn't want to see a list of names. He wanted Lara, who he felt questioned his manhood. There was no reason to fight him but the kid wanted it. Oscar told me it's the wrong style for Canelo but he's (Lara) no Floyd. Sometimes the fighters see things you don't."

Alvarez won a split decision and then destroyed James Kirkland and beat Miguel Cotto in a bout that did more than 900,000 buys on pay-per-view, thus setting up the May 7 match with Khan. By this point Alvarez had become "a brand here in the States," Gomez said. The proof came when he signed a deal with Tecate beer to serve as its spokesman for an

NAOKI FUKUDA




**Alvarez's victory over Miguel Cotto (right) was his biggest step toward becoming the face of boxing.**

ad campaign targeting an English-speaking audience. It is the first time Tecate has signed a fighter to an endorsement deal and the decision to target English-speaking beer drinkers has put a new demand on Alvarez.

He is studying English, working with a tutor even while in training camp, because becoming a crossover star and the new face of boxing demands he become bilingual. Pacquiao had to make a similar adjustment and it was long believed Julio Cesar Chavez's appeal would have been greater had he mastered English. The plan is for Alvarez to unveil his improving English during HBO's "24/7" series leading up to the Khan fight.

That's where Khan comes in. He is a highly recognizable name, an Olympic medalist, a two-time world champion at 140 pounds and someone who has been constantly in the news the past several years in pursuit of Mayweather and Pacquiao. That he landed neither, Gomez believes, was the opening for De La Hoya to make the Alvarez-Khan deal. But to make it the risk had to be assessed and a tricky deal had to be negotiated.

Khan was once promoted by Golden Boy but had been recently working with Al Haymon, whose Premier Championship Boxing series has taken over television and become the subject of a $300 million anti-trust lawsuit between Haymon and Golden Boy. Although at some point Haymon had to sign off on the deal, the negotiations were done directly with Khan and his father, Shah, thereby avoiding obvious roadblocks. Shockingly, no news leaked out until the day the bout was announced, leaving the boxing world stunned and Alvarez pleased.

"It was a little bit surprising for me that he accepted the fight," Alvarez said. "He's definitely one of the top fighters in the world, a great fighter. He's very fast, his boxing ability is unmatched. It's going to be a great challenge for me. But I've faced pretty much every style there is. I'm capable against someone like Amir."

With a megafight showdown with Golovkin on the horizon for Alvarez, Gomez and De La Hoya had to decide whether the managed risk theory applied. Both agreed it did even though Khan's speed is a factor to be concerned with.

"We took some chances with Canelo in the past," Gomez said. "You worry about those things but we have youth, speed and power on our side. That's a big advantage for us. It was against Lara and Trout and Kirkland and Cotto. If you lose on the way up, that's tough. Now he's fighting champions and former champions so you know there's risk. But we wanted a big name.

"Amir is recognized here and in Europe. His name was mentioned so many times with Floyd we felt we could make this into an event. The guy is fast and he can punch so there's intrigue there and the negotiation was fairly easy. They were very frustrated with the people who didn't deliver for them several times. If he'd gotten the Floyd fight, he wouldn't be fighting Canelo. If he got the fights he was promised, we don't get to make this fight. They felt passed over. Amir had been dying for a big fight. We knew him personally. So the deal got made.

"When you make a match like this and your fighter is such a major part of your company there's pressure but Don Chargin taught me that as long as the advantages outweigh the risks it puts you at ease. Can he lose? Sure, because its sports. There's always a winner and a loser. But you study the opponent. Then you go down a checklist and as long as six or seven of the 10 things are to your advantage, let your fighter do his job."

Come May 7, Canelo Alvarez's job is the same as it has always been: It's to win. But his outsized importance for Golden Boy's future and boxing's makes clear he's not just fighting for himself any more. He's fighting to become the new face of his sport.

"Canelo is the biggest star in the sport and he's only getting better," De La Hoya said when the fight was announced. "Those who predicted he would take an easy fight for his first defense have been proven wrong once again." RING

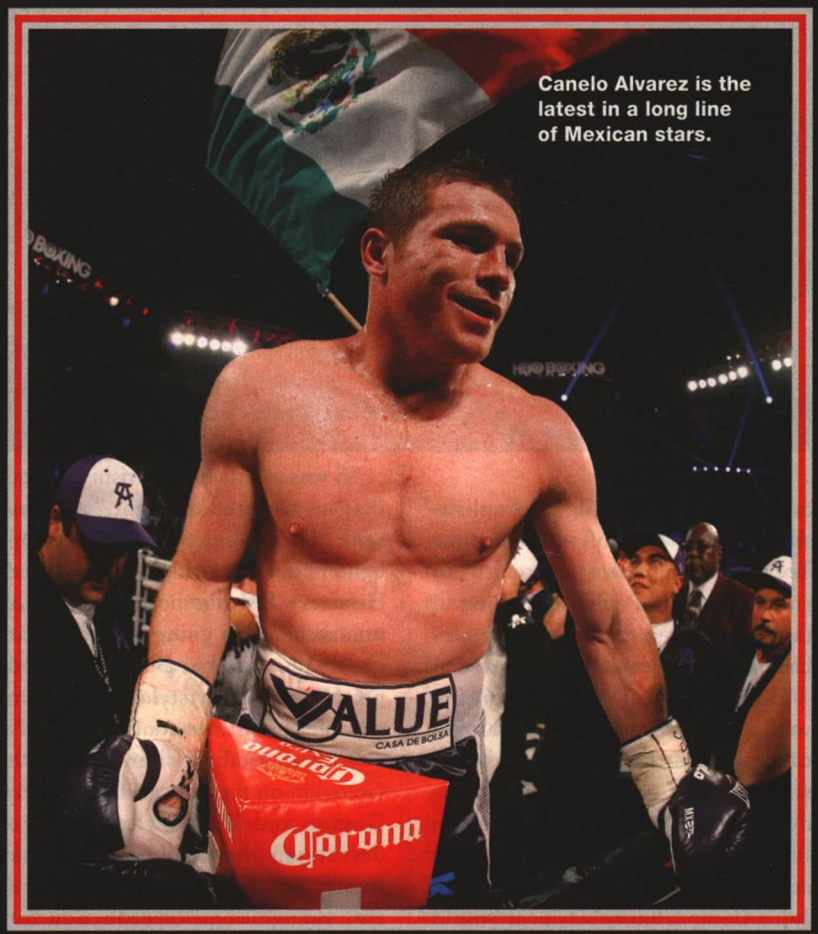
# THE MEXICAN PIONEERS

THESE FIVE FIGHTERS LAID THE GROUNDWORK FOR CONTEMPORARY STAR **CANELO ALVAREZ**

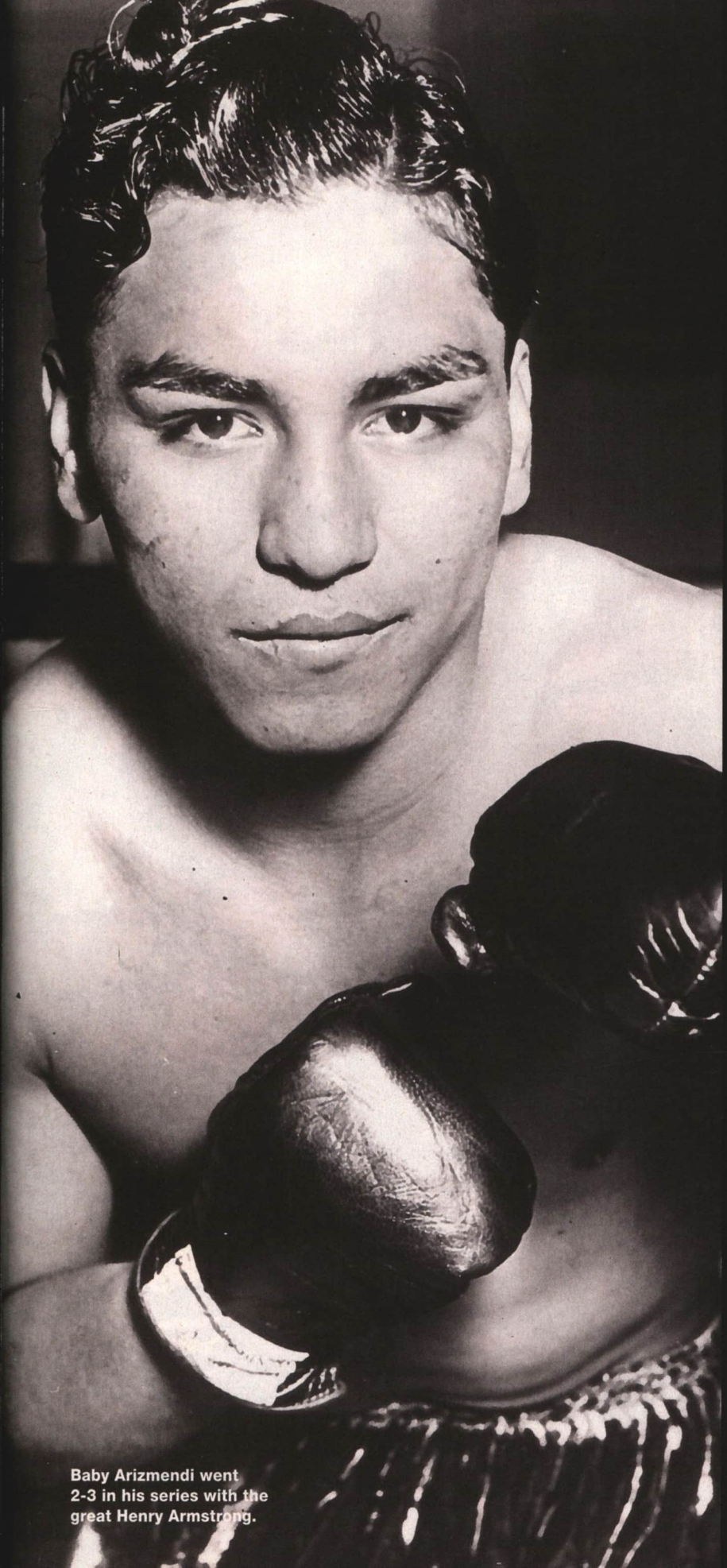
By **Don Stradley**

**Like clockwork, a shining** new boxing star emerges from Mexico every few years to win the hearts and minds of his countrymen. Canelo Alvarez is the main man now but he's merely the latest in a long line of fighters that stretches back to the early 1930s.

The five fighters in the following profile are long forgotten but they reigned at a time when, because there were fewer weight classes, being a champion had more cachet. Only one is in the International Boxing Hall of Fame but an argument could be made that a couple of the others belong there, for they were as popular as any Mexican fighter you'd care to name and had records to rival many inductees. If nothing else, they were the first links in a chain leading all the way to Alvarez.




Canelo Alvarez is the latest in a long line of Mexican stars.



Baby Arizmendi went 2-3 in his series with the great Henry Armstrong.

## BABY ARIZMENDI

**Years Active:** 1927-42
**Record:** 84-26-14 (19 KOs)

**Alberto "Baby" Arizmendi earned** acclaim as California's featherweight champion in 1932 and collected New York's version of the title two years later. Throughout a career that spanned an estimated 124 official bouts, Arizmendi proved that Mexican fighters could not only compete with the best but could sell enough tickets to please any promoter. He could grab headlines, too. Stories of his post-fight celebrations and affairs with Hollywood actresses became the stuff of legend.

Arizmendi's early record is difficult to pin down. Sources can't agree on exactly where or when he was born – only that he is from Mexico – or when he turned pro but the general consensus is that he began fighting professionally in either 1926 or 1927 as a 13- or 14-year-old bantamweight. He eventually fought a who's who of his era, including Fidel LaBarba, Mike Belloise, Chalky Wright, Lou Ambers, Sammy Angott, Tony Canzoneri and many more.

The jewel in the crown of Arizmendi's stormy career was a blood-spattered five-fight series with Henry Armstrong. Arizmendi won the first two encounters in Mexico; Armstrong took the next three in Los Angeles. "Homicide Hank" would praise Arizmendi as being impossible to hurt. Longtime boxing chronicler Budd Schulberg recalled the Armstrong-Arizmendi bouts with awe, describing the action as "nonstop attack from two resolute little bulls." A hard-partying lifestyle hampered the later part of Arizmendi's career, though he remained a regular attraction at Hollywood's Legion Stadium.

One intriguing fact about Arizmendi was that a childhood illness left him with a partly paralyzed right hand. So into the ring he went, essentially a one-handed fighter, to compete with the best of his era. No wonder he was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame. Imagine if he'd had a good right hand?

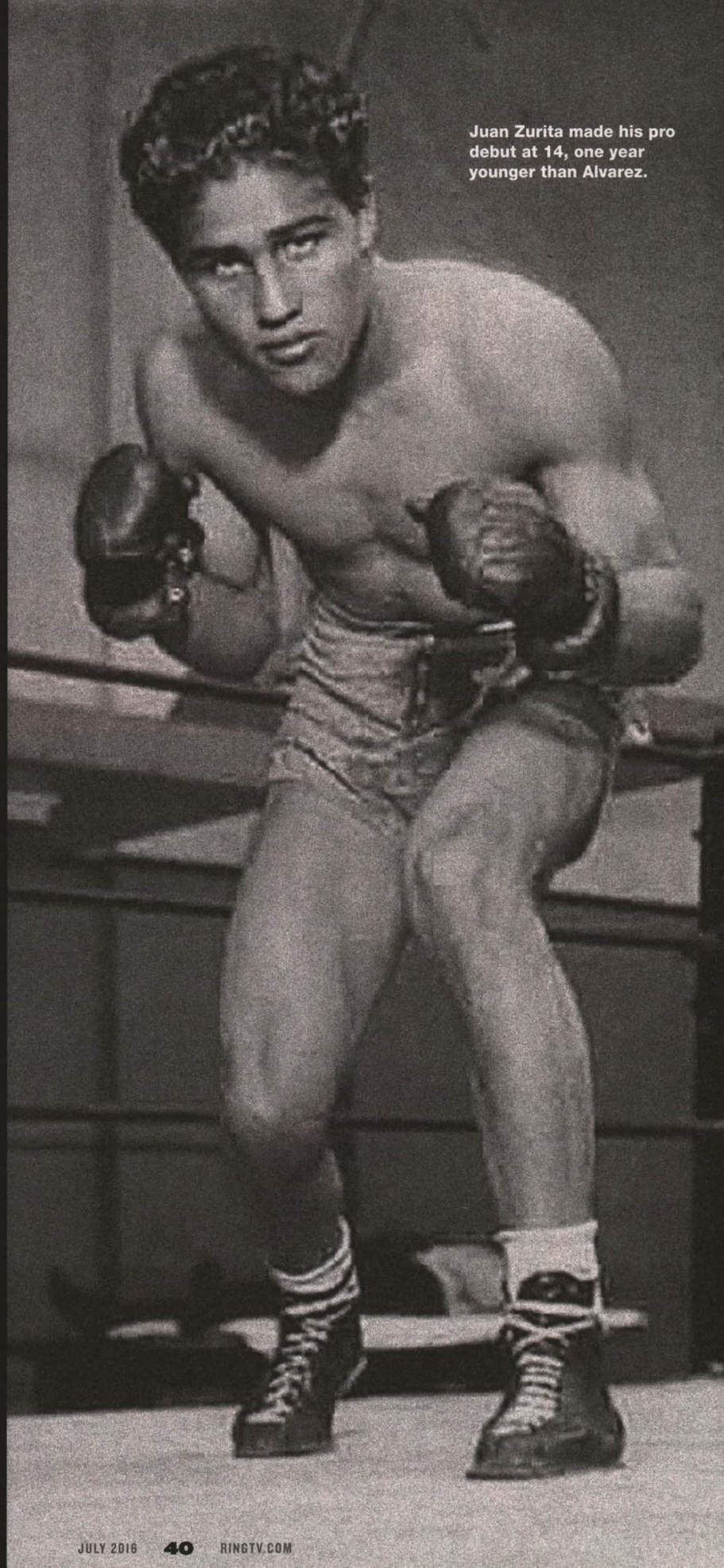
## JUAN ZURITA

**Years Active:** 1932-48
**Record:** 131-23-1 (47 KOs)

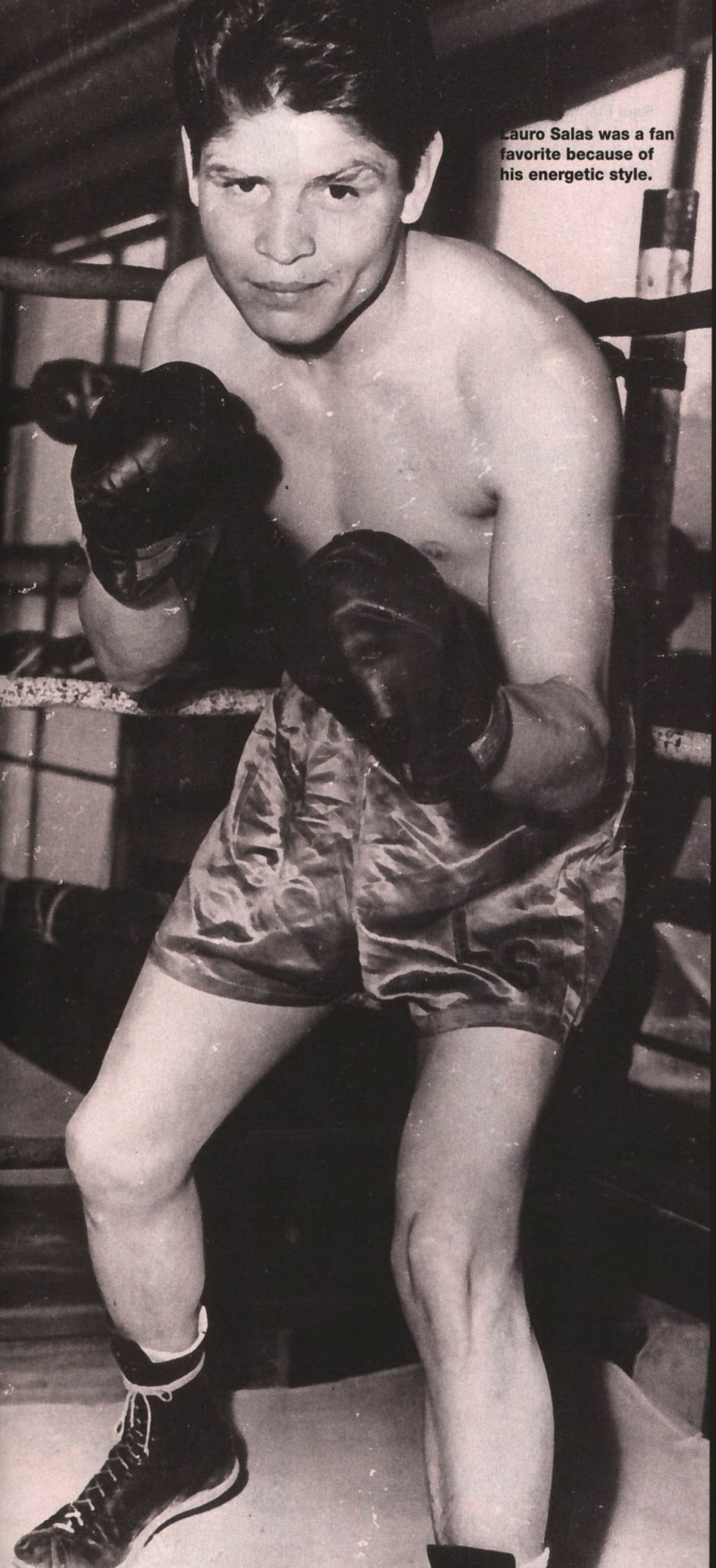
**It wouldn't be until 1944 that a** boxeador from south of the border would win a championship. This time it would be a ring veteran with a daring style, a fighter who could rumble as a righty or a lefty, a man whose life mingled easily with myth, including one bit of apocrypha that had him starting his pro career at age 10. But once you separated the truth from the fiction of Juan Zurita's career, you were still left with an amazing ledger that included more than 150 professional fights – the number is inexact because historians keep digging up more bouts – including wins over such esteemed names as Sixto Escobar, Midget Wolgast and Sammy Angott, the last of which earned Zurita the NBA lightweight title. Since Mexican-American Battling Shaw had been a Texas boy, Zurita has the distinction of being the first Mexican-born world champion.

Though the fight, held in Los Angeles, was described by the United Press as a "desultory" 15-rounder, there was no doubt that Zurita had controlled the action. "Zurita's Mexican admirers stormed the ring before the verdict was announced," noted the UP, "so certain were they of the outcome."

Unfortunately, it was another short title reign for a Mexican champion. Just over one year later, in a bout that took place in a Mexico City bullring and was billed as the first championship fight held in that country, Zurita fell in two rounds to Ike Williams. The Mexican fans were so heated over Zurita's loss that they threw rubbish at the ring, while a phalanx of guards was needed to escort the newly crowned Williams back to the clubhouse. Zurita fought only once more, retiring in 1948.



**Juan Zurita made his pro debut at 14, one year younger than Alvarez.**



Lauro Salas was a fan favorite because of his energetic style.

## LAURO SALAS

**Years Active:** 1946-61
**Record:** 91-58-13 (45 KOs)

**Known as "The Lion of** Monterrey," Salas' spirited style made him a favorite at the Los Angeles Olympic Auditorium and Legion Stadium in Hollywood. Known to fight 10 or 11 times in a 12-month span, Salas was a promoter's dream: He was a durable brawler who fought constantly and never appeared to need a rest.

On his way up the perilous ladder of success, Salas lost to some of the best of the day, including Sandy Saddler and Art Aragon. But Salas was apparently learning in defeat, for when he finally earned a shot at lightweight champion Jimmy Carter in 1952, Salas surprised everyone by keeping the bout close and putting Carter on the deck in the 15th round. Though Carter survived and had his hand raised at the end, Salas was impressive enough to earn an immediate rematch. This time, fighting like the jungle cat he was named after, Salas found himself the winner by a split decision, making him only the second world champion from Mexico after Zurita.

Salas didn't fare as well in the rubber match, losing to Carter on points. He continued fighting for many years, usually in California, but as his career wound down he began appearing in such far-flung locations as Japan and Brazil. His final bout took place in Jamaica, where he lost to upstart Bunny Grant. Salas was only 32 when he retired but with 1,376 rounds behind him, enough was enough.

## RAUL MACIAS

**Years Active:** 1952-62
**Record:** 41-2-0 (25 KOs)

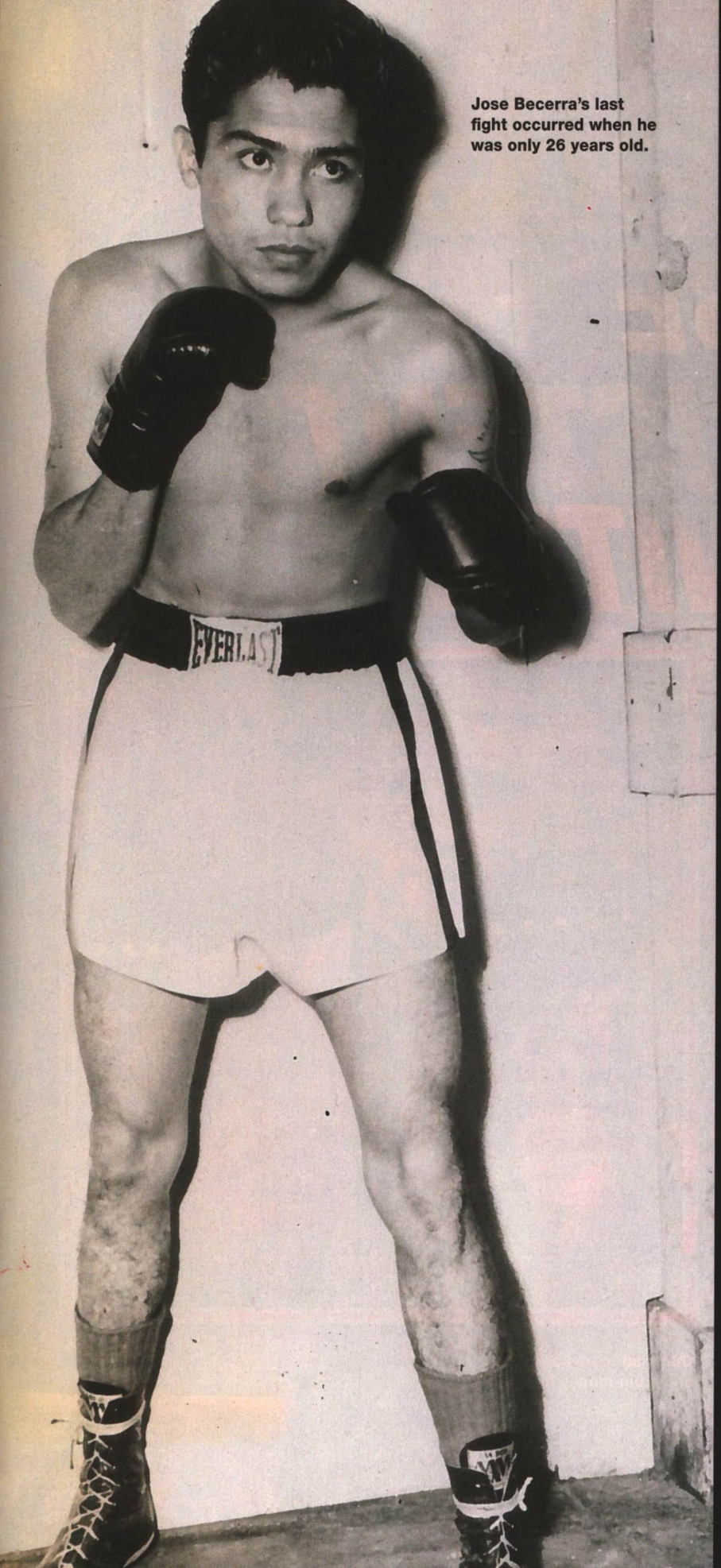
**A bronze medalist at the 1952** Helsinki Olympics, Macias' radiant smile belied an aggressive fighting style that often left opponents sprawled through the ring ropes, wondering what had hit them. Nicknamed "El Raton" ("The Mouse"), Macias was a nearly perfect offensive machine, walking opponents down and hitting them hard with both hands. His popularity in Mexico was so great that in 1957 he starred as himself in a feature film about his life, a stunt usually reserved for the likes of Muhammad Ali.

Macias made his American debut in 1955 at the Cow Palace in Daly City, California, facing Thailand's Chamroen Songkitrat for the vacant NBA bantamweight title. Though Songkitrat was hardly a top contender (he'd had 10 pro bouts and lost his previous two), Macias' 11th-round TKO created a frenzy. "Hundreds of screaming Mexicans clambered into the ring the minute it was over," reported the Associated Press, "with police unable to stop the mad scramble." Macias' supporters were known to bring roosters to his bouts and set them loose when he was victorious, creating a unique kind of post-fight mayhem.

Though Macias soon suffered a broken jaw in a non-title loss to Billy Peacock (whom he'd beaten before), he rebounded to notch 17 straight wins, including successful title defenses against Leo Espinosa and Dommy Ursua. This was Macias' undeniable heyday, as he scored 14 of those wins by KO and headlined in locations ranging from Hollywood to Mexico City. His reign as champion came to an end when he lost a split-decision to Alphonse Halimi of France.

After his retirement from boxing, Macias appeared in a handful of movies and trained several young Mexican fighters. What Mexican kid wouldn't want to learn from Macias? He was, indeed, the mouse that roared.

**Raul Macias was a star in the early days of televised boxing in Mexico.**




Jose Becerra's last fight occurred when he was only 26 years old.

## JOSE BECERRA

**Years Active:** 1953-62
**Record:** 68-4-3 (42 KOs)

**Becerra won the bantamweight** title in 1959 by stopping Alphonse Halimi in the eighth round in Los Angeles. "Pandemonium broke loose," Bill Miller reported for THE RING. "Even this hardened veteran of ring activity found himself cheering." To put emphasis on his dominance, Becerra stopped Halimi in a rematch seven months later, again in L.A. The energetic young man with the cobra-quick left hook had not only twice avenged compatriot Raul Macias' loss to Halimi, but seemed poised to rule the bantamweight class for many years.

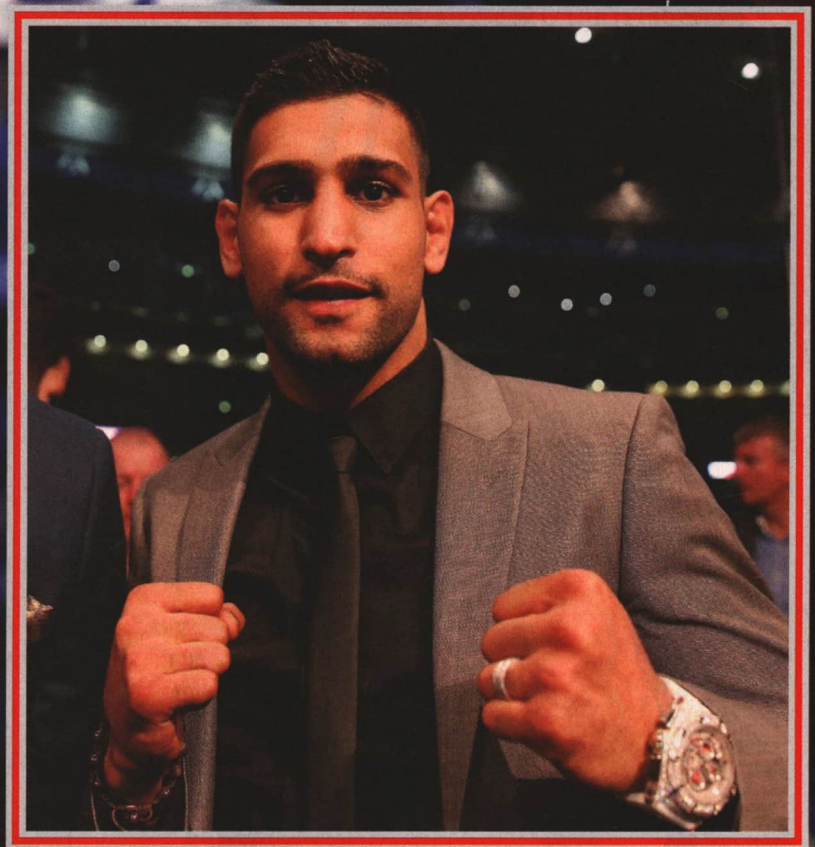
Unfortunately, in between the two bouts with Halimi, Becerra was visited by the nightmare that haunts many fighters but only comes true for a few: the death of an opponent. Twenty-four-year-old Walt Ingram of West Virginia was brought to Becerra's hometown of Guadalajara for what was to be an easy fight, a welcome-home affair for the new champ. It ended in tragedy, with Ingram losing by ninth-round TKO and dying from injuries sustained in the bout.

Those close to Becerra said he was never the same after Ingram's death. Deeply religious and not impressed by fame, Becerra lost his taste for the business. After losing a non-title bout to the unheralded Eloy Sanchez in 1960, Becerra retired at 24. He came back only once, to fight a six-rounder in Guadalajara to raise funds for an injured fighter named Rudy Coronado. Becerra donated his fight-purse to Coronado's family. He was that sort of fellow, a dynamic puncher with a kind heart. RING

# VULNERABLE? MAYBE PERSISTENT? DEFINITELY

**AMIR KHAN** SAYS HE HAS EMERGED FROM HIS DISAPPOINTMENTS A BETTER FIGHTER

By **Elliot Worsell**



Khan had to be patient to land a big-money fight.

Faith plays a significant role in Amir Khan's life and appears in numerous guises. There is, for starters, his Islamic faith. A devout follower, Khan is accustomed to organizing fights around Ramadan, a month of fasting observed by Muslims worldwide. Then there's the faith he has frequently shown in his own boxing ability, including the faith he displayed when, at the tender age of 17, he ventured to the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens and secured a silver medal against the odds. He has faith, also, in the idea that ups will invariably follow downs, that crushing defeats will lead to brighter days – world titles, no less – and that setbacks shouldn't necessarily spell the end. Finally, and just as crucial, is Khan's faith in his chosen path being the right one. After all, having spent years chasing a Floyd Mayweather Jr. superfight and then going after Manny Pacquiao before signing to fight Canelo Alvarez, some labeled him delusional and desperate. Others, meanwhile, said he should head back to England and cash in against Kell Brook. But, no, Amir Khan kept the faith. Just as he always has done.

"I've made a name for myself in America and I knew I'd be an attractive proposition for someone," says Khan, who faces Alvarez on May 7 in Las Vegas. "I always had faith a big fight would come off, even when Mayweather retired.

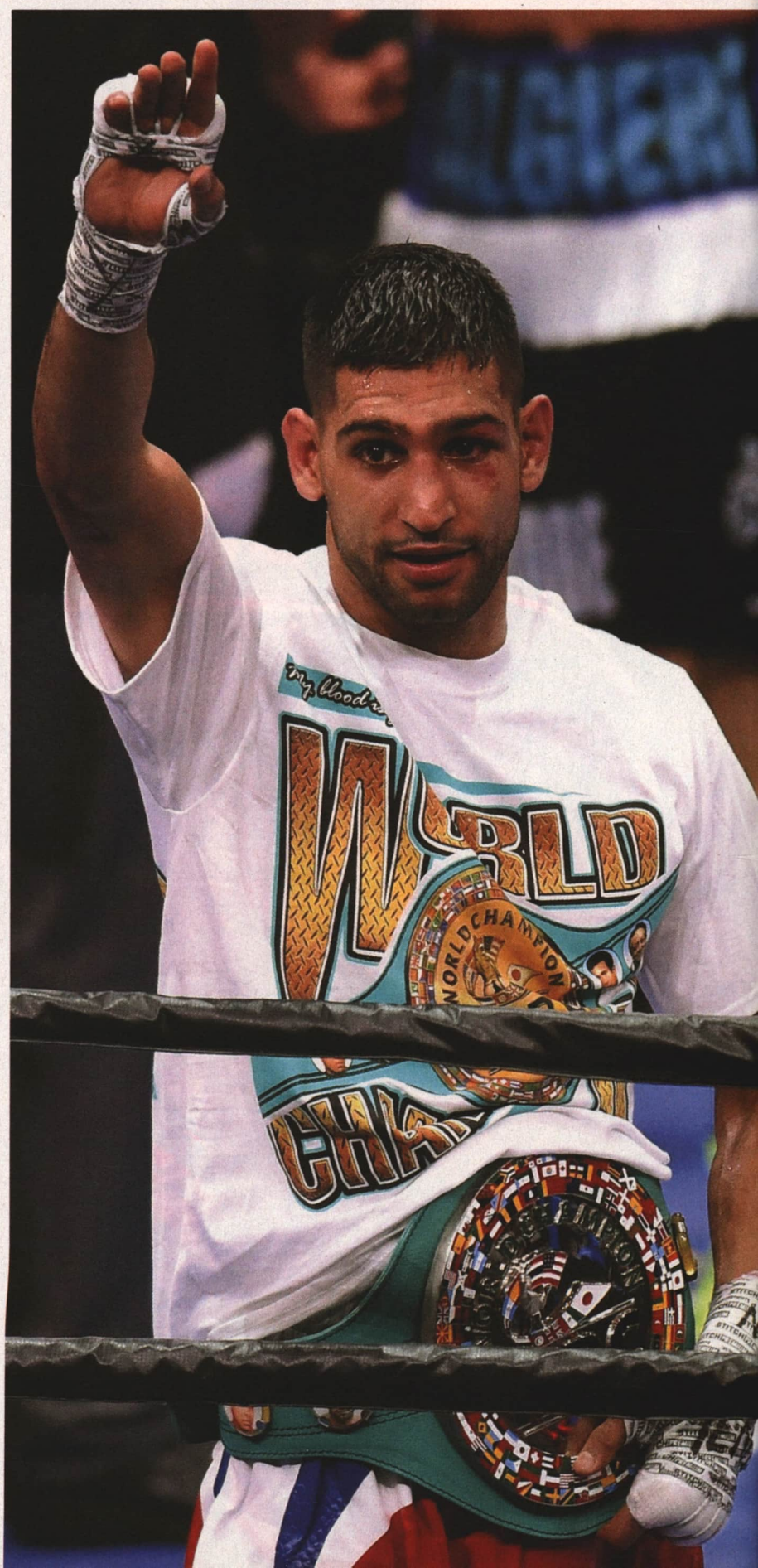
"I'm now showing everyone there are plenty of guys who say they want to fight me but don't *really* want to fight me. They're the ones hiding behind excuses. I'm getting on with my career and taking the biggest and riskiest fights possible. I feel I deserve a big fight and deserve to be in a position to face the biggest names in boxing because I'm the one who has put my neck on the line, made the sacrifices and made it happen."

Khan is currently training in San

Francisco and growing bigger, stronger and bolder by the day. An unlikely RING and WBC middleweight championship fight with Alvarez, set for Sin City's new T-Mobile Arena, will take place at a catchweight of 155 pounds, yet Khan has never officially fought at a weight higher than 147. He is, therefore, breaking new ground with this one. He's sacrificing weight and time spent with loved ones in order to first secure and then win a superfight, something he has craved for so long, all the while knowing that having his name up in lights comes with a sizable health risk.

"It's a fight I can lose and a fight where I might get hurt and never fight again," concedes the former WBA and IBF world junior welterweight titleholder. "But I want to shut the doubters up. I know how good Alvarez is. I need an opponent like him. You need to know you've got a guy in front of you who is very tough and won't allow you to make mistakes. That makes you work harder and stay focused. If I've got an easy opponent in front of me, my focus isn't there. I've made that mistake in the past. I've gone into fights with no fear and found myself in trouble. But this is one fight I can't take my eyes off. One mistake against Canelo and I could be badly hurt. It will hurt me physically and it could hurt my career, too. I know that. I have to be so smart and focused."

Khan, by his own admission, hasn't always been smart and focused; he's been brave and brilliant. That much is beyond doubt. But oftentimes these same admirable traits have led to his downfall. Yes, an Olympic silver medal at 17, fresh out of high school, was a nod to prodigious talent and audacity, yet, on the flip-side, a 2008 defeat to unheralded Colombian Breidis Prescott was a damning indictment of youthful naivete. Prescott was 19-0 at the time, while Khan was 18-0,




**Khan is a two-time world junior welterweight titleholder.**

# NEVER SAY DIE

**Amir Khan has been written off more than once in his up-and-down career but has demonstrated admirable perseverance. Here is a look at his personal boxing roller coaster.**

**▲ UP**

**2004-08:** Wins silver medal in the 2004 Olympics – losing to Cuban Mario Kindelan in the gold-medal match – and then wins his first 18 pro fights, 14 by knockout.

**DOWN ▼**

**2008:** Stopped in 54 seconds by relatively unknown Colombian Breidis Prescott in one of the most shocking results in recent years, raising questions about Khan's ability to take a punch and his future.

**▲ UP**

**2008-11:** Embarks on an impressive eight-fight run, including victories over Marco Antonio Barrera, Andreas Kotelnik (to win a world 140-pound title), Paulie Malignaggi, Marcos Maidana and Zab Judah (to unify two titles).

**DOWN ▼**

**2011-12:** Loses a controversial split decision and his titles to Lamont Peterson and, in his next fight, is brutally stopped in four rounds by Danny Garcia. Some suggest he's finished.

**▲ UP**

**2012-15:** Wins his next five fights – including victories over Devon Alexander and Chris Algieri – to regain momentum.

**DOWN ▼**

**2014-15:** Doggedly pursues windfall fights against Floyd Mayweather Jr. and Manny Pacquiao – while more or less ignoring countryman Kell Brook – but, much to his frustration, comes up empty.

**▲ UP**

**2016:** Golden Boy Promotions makes a surprise announcement in February that its superstar, Canelo Alvarez, will fight Khan on pay-per-view television May 7 in Las Vegas.

NAOKI FUKUDA

and the fight, over in just 54 seconds, stood not only as a first career setback but as a reason to doubt *everything*. Doubt the perfect record, doubt the Olympic pedigree, doubt the talent, doubt the potential, doubt the world title aspirations. Doubt it all.

"You always think nobody will beat you," Khan said. "I was no different. I thought I'd be the best ever. Most fighters think the same. They all dream of being an undefeated champion."

Khan, however, knew as early as fight No. 19 that this would never be the case.

"Even though I got beaten badly, I still had that belief," he says. "I still thought I'd become a world champion. I just saw the loss to Prescott as a bump in the road.

"Some people can suffer a defeat and it destroys them. It finishes them. They're never the same. But I've used my defeats in a good way. I ask myself why I suffered the defeat and it helps me to improve. I've always tried to change something after a loss."

Now hamstrung by apparent fragility, Khan sucked it up, moved on from the Prescott disaster and, within three fights, had emphatically beaten Andreas Kotelnik to lift the WBA world junior welterweight title, a belt he'd go on to successfully defend five times. Part of the reason for this turnaround, he believes, was moving to America – to train with Freddie Roach at Los Angeles' Wild Card Boxing Club – and the serenity that ensued.

"It was a massive sacrifice," he said. "I left everything at home, including my family, and went off to train on my own. I was meeting new people and very few of them had heard of me. Nobody was looking to do me any favors or make it easy.

"I love England. England will always be home for me. Nothing will ever beat that. But I have had to get used to America. I've spent so much time over here now. Sometimes you miss your family and don't really enjoy it but most of the time I try to make it good. Sometimes my dad comes out here and so does my wife and little baby girl. That makes it easier. I try to make it as fun as possible. But, look, it's training – I know it can't be too nice."

By way of initiation, Khan was beckoned into the Wild Card ring opposite Pacquiao, pound-for-pound superstar, for the first of many sparring sessions. The Bolton wanderer, still smarting from the Prescott loss, shrugged his shoulders, banged together a pair of oversized gloves and bit down on his mouthpiece. After that, away they went. Confidence and Khan reconnected.

"When I finally got into the ring with Manny, I just hit and moved, used my footwork and kept away," he said. "I remember hitting him with two jabs – bang, bang – and knocking his head back. I thought to myself, 'This is easier than I thought it would be.' I thought he was going to be all over me. It was probably a good thing I was nervous beforehand because it kept me sharp. I was catching him with the kind of shots not many other sparring partners land on him. I was catching him with some really big shots."

Sparring over, Pacquiao approached Khan, put a hand on his shoulder and said, "You were so quick, I couldn't see your punches." Khan smiled. Whether the comforting words of an elder statesman trying to make the newcomer fit in or a genuine, heartfelt assessment of potential, it sounded good to him. Roach, meanwhile, called the session a "cockfight."

Whatever the correct term, whatever the agenda, it was a world away from the type of gym experience Khan was accustomed to back in England.

"We'd have British and Commonwealth champions, often junior middleweights or middleweights, coming to the gym and I'd just take them apart," he said. "They would then not turn up the next day, or, if they did, it would just be to take a photograph with me. They had too much respect."

Some fighters would relish such an environment, one that boosts their

ego, one that solidifies their position as the gym alpha male, but Khan saw no sense in it. It would, he felt, only cultivate further bad habits and thus lead to further mistakes. There'd be another Prescott; he was sure of it. He had to get away. He had to escape.

So he did.

Some bad habits had formed already, however. A split-decision loss to Lamont Peterson in December 2012 and a fourth-round knockout loss to Danny "Swift" Garcia seven months later prompted further introspection and even greater adjustments.

"I think the hardest defeat was the Garcia one," Khan said. "If I'd just stuck to my game plan instead of going in there and trying to knock Garcia out, I'd have won. But I fought the wrong fight, Garcia beat me and he's become a massive name since. I helped him do that.

"That fight hurt me because I knew exactly what I did wrong and knew I could have prevented it. I know I wasn't focused in training camp and didn't prepare properly. I could have just boxed him. I was too macho. That happens sometimes when you're young. You do stupid things."

Faith, again. Khan has for years possessed immense (almost blind) faith in his ability to linger in punching range and overwhelm opponents with dazzling speed and combinations, even though critics, and sometimes past form, suggest his vulnerability at close quarters makes such logic utterly flawed. Garcia, more than anyone, proved this.

"I look back at the fight and think, 'Why did I just stand with him and trade punches? Why, when I'm hurt, am I trying to swing back and hurt him rather than hold or move away?'" Khan said. "I've got great footwork, great movement, and I should have used it. Instead, I tried to be too macho and paid the price. Thankfully, I'm a much calmer fighter now. I don't make those same mistakes."

Less indulgent, Khan still moves, more rapidly than most, but does so with a far greater sense of purpose and economy. He now performs moves for a reason. He gets busy on an opponent, often slashing his fists like Edward Scissorhands on a garden hedge, but then gets out in the nick of time, safe from harm. It's easier this way, cleaner this way, and Virgil Hunter, his latest teacher, is seemingly the one responsible for curbing Khan's enthusiasm.

"You see a fighter's tendencies – both my guy and the other guy – and then you work the adjustments during the fight," Hunter said. "There are certain things you can do to make the other guy pay for his mistakes but you need to be patient and you need to have method. If a dog is just biting you, you've got to move away from his jaws. We're just moving away from the jaws now."

So far, so good. He's unbeaten in five since the "Swift" lesson.

"It's funny," Khan said, "when I was 25 I used to think I was mature and fully grown up. But, if I look back now and take into account everything I've learned since, I was still a boy

NAOKI FUKUDA

Khan (left) had trouble getting past Chris Algieri last May.

then. I'm a lot more mature now. You see things differently. You *do* things differently. As I've got older I've started to take the sport more seriously. I've been away from home and have had to focus on training more. Outside the gym, I'm resting when I should be resting. That never used to happen when I was younger. I had too much energy for my own good and I'd try burning it all. Now I know how to conserve energy and use it the right way."

Khan, at 17, was slimmer, leaner, slighter around the shoulders but also wonderfully innocent, ignorant, adventurous and ambitious.

"At 17 I felt I could beat everyone but didn't really know how to go about doing it," he said. "When everybody doubted me, I shocked them. I know I've still got the same determination and drive I had back then, but, with that drive and hunger, I'm also much smarter and know my strengths and weaknesses. I know what has worked and what hasn't worked in my boxing career.

"There's now more pressure on me than there's ever been. I didn't have pressure on me at 17 because nobody expected me to do anything at the Olympics. It's different now, though. People want to see me win. People *expect* me to win."

And yet few think Khan will triumph against Alvarez on May 7. When pressed for reasons why, they point to the obvious size difference and the supposed disparity in overall robustness. Khan feels it, too. He senses the doubters rehearsing their post-fight commiserations and he visualizes the smug smile on the face of Kell Brook, his principal U.K. rival. But then, during such moments, he casts his mind back to being 17 again, just as we all do from time to time, and everything seems all right in the world.

"I think going to the Olympics at 17 was a bigger task (than facing Canelo)," he said of the last time he was an underdog. "I've got people who expect me to win this fight. I've heard Roger Mayweather say I'll win and a few other people in boxing as well. When I went to the Olympics, however, nobody expected me to win a fight, let alone a medal. Nobody even knew who I was.

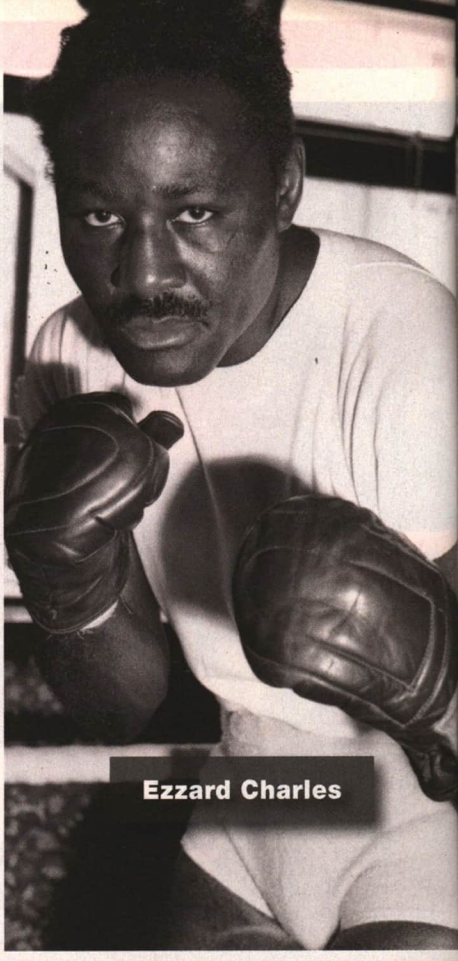
"This fight with Canelo is different. I've been working towards this opportunity for over 10 years. I'm ready for it. When I beat Canelo, it will be the greatest moment in my boxing career. But I'll never forget the Olympics. That's what put me where I am today."

It's also what gives Virgil Hunter, a onetime admirer of the boy with the silver, total faith in the man now carrying out his instructions in pursuit of gold. "Amir proved at 17 it was in him," he said. "We don't have to guess. He went to the big stage at 17, a pup, and proved he had special quality in him. I *know* it's there."

# THE GREATEST MODERN LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

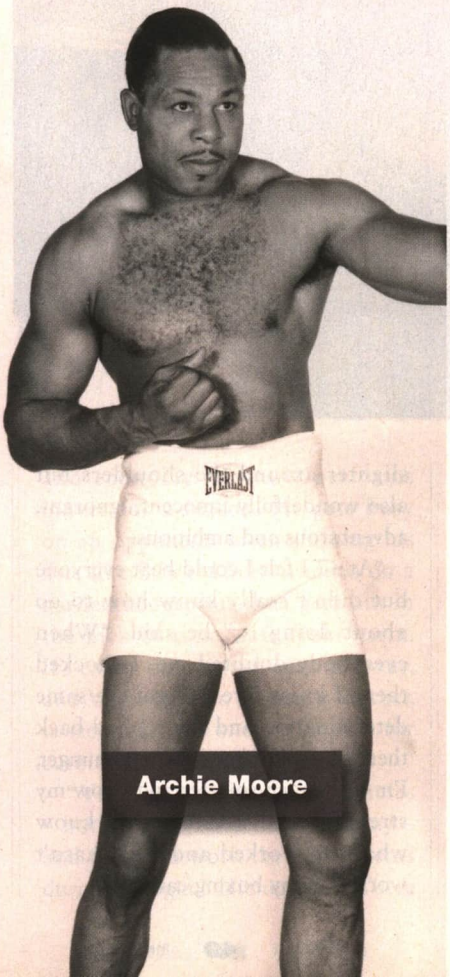
## EZZARD CHARLES BEATS OUT ARCHIE MOORE AMONG EIGHT GREAT 175-POUNDERS IN A POLL OF 26 EXPERTS

By **Thomas Hauser**

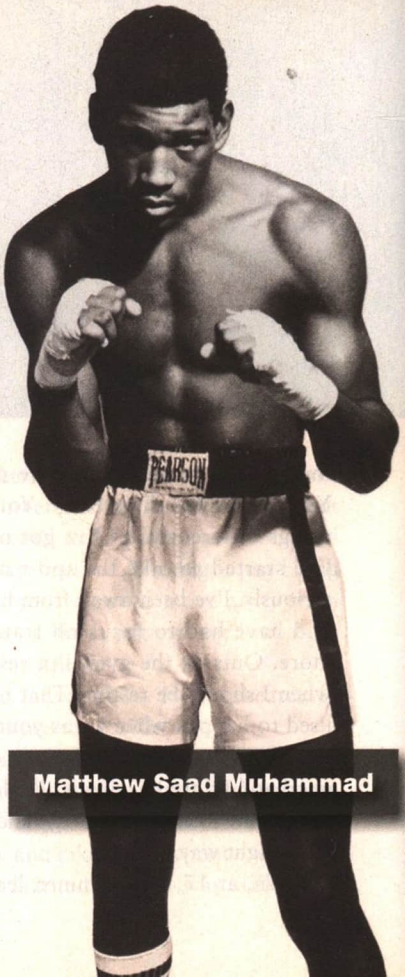


Ezzard Charles

Sergey Kovalev



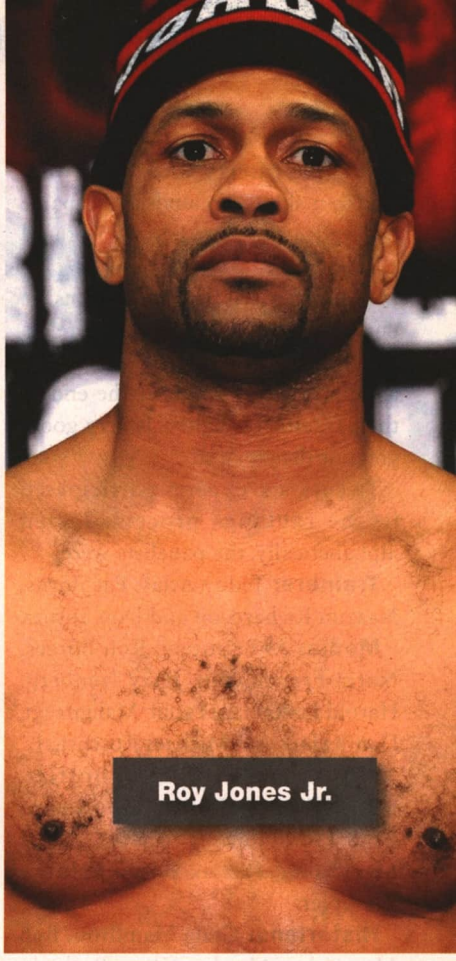

Archie Moore



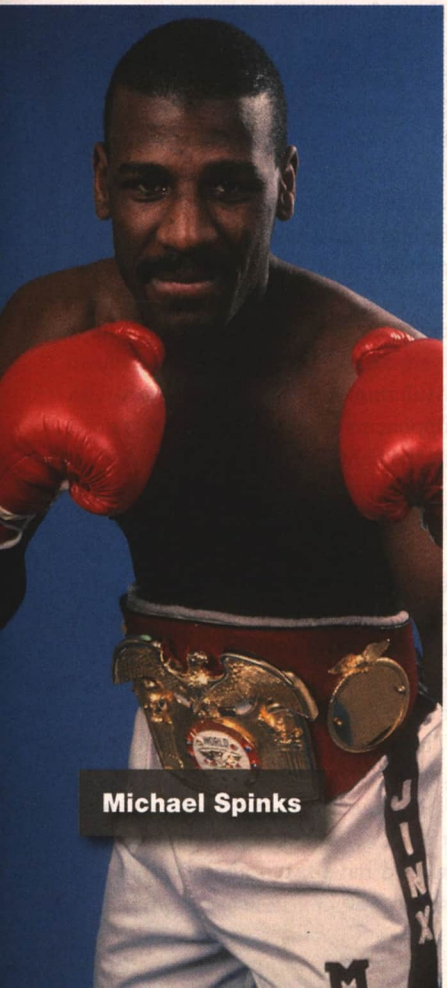

Matthew Saad Muhammad

Billy Conn

Bob Foster



Roy Jones Jr.



Michael Spinks

Ranking great fighters from different eras, when done seriously, is a daunting task. It's easy to sit down and put together a shoot-from-the-hip list. But that doesn't do justice to the fighters.

In recent years, I've sought to quantify ring greatness in a credible way. I've compiled lists of great champions who reigned at 135, 147, and 160 pounds and matched them against each other in round-robin tournaments with the results of each fight being predicted by a panel of boxing industry experts.

This time, it's modern 175-pound greats.

The light heavyweights chosen for the tournament in alphabetical order are Ezzard Charles, Billy Conn, Bob Foster, Roy Jones Jr., Sergey Kovalev, Archie Moore, Matthew Saad Muhammad and Michael Spinks.

Six of these fighters tested the heavyweight waters in a meaningful way. Charles and Spinks claimed the legitimate heavyweight championship of the world. Jones bested John Ruiz for the WBA belt. Conn fought Joe Louis twice. Moore vied for the title against Rocky Marciano and Floyd Patterson. Foster fought Joe Frazier and Muhammad Ali.

Charles never won the light heavyweight title but he's included in the tournament because many people believe he was at his best at 175 pounds. I should note that Charles fought Archie Moore three times and won each time.

I didn't include fighters who plied their trade prior to the mid-1930s because there's not enough film footage available to properly evaluate them. Where Sergey Kovalev is concerned, he has yet to face inquisitors against whom he could demonstrate greatness. Now is his chance.

The panelists were asked to assume for each hypothetical fight that both fighters were at the point in their

respective careers when they were able to make 175 pounds and capable of duplicating their best 175-pound performance. One can look to side issues such as same-day weigh-ins vs. day-before weigh-ins. And there's a difference between going 12 rounds as opposed to 15. But at the end of the day, either a fighter is very good, great or the greatest.

Twenty-six experts participated in the rankings process. Listed alphabetically, the panelists were:

**Trainers:** Teddy Atlas, Pat Burns, Naazim Richardson and Don Turner.

**Media:** Al Bernstein, Ron Borges, Norm Frauenheim, Jerry Izenberg, Harold Lederman, Paulie Malignaggi, Dan Rafael and Michael Rosenthal.

**Matchmakers:** Eric Bottjer, Don Elbaum, Bobby Goodman, Brad Goodman, Ron Katz, Mike Marchionte, Russell Peltz and Bruce Trampler.

**Historians:** Craig Hamilton, Bob Mee, Clay Moyle, Adam Pollack, Randy Roberts and Mike Tyson.

If each of the eight fighters in the tournament had fought the other seven, there would have been 28 fights. And there were 26 panelists. Thus, 728 fight predictions were entered into the database. Fighters were awarded one point for each predicted win and a half-point for each predicted draw (too close to call). A perfect score would have been 182 points.

One matchmaker said that he never saw Moore, Charles or Conn fight and didn't feel comfortable predicting outcomes for their matches based on film footage. A weighted average from the other electors was used to fill in the fights at issue in his tournament grid.

In the end, Ezzard Charles was the clear choice for No. 1.

**The final rankings and point totals are:** Ezzard Charles, 156 points; Archie Moore, 120; Roy Jones Jr., 104.5; Bob Foster, 103.5; Michael Spinks, 88; Billy Conn, 66; Sergey Kovalev, 48; Matthew Saad Muhammad, 42.

Sixteen of the 26 panelists thought that Bob Foster would have beaten Roy Jones Jr. Nine picked Jones, while one said the matchup was too close to call. But Jones' record against four of the other six fighters in the tournament was superior to Foster's. That gave Jones a one-point edge in the final rankings.

Thirteen of the 26 panelists thought that Charles would have won all of his fights. Four thought that Jones would have prevailed in all seven of his bouts. Three awarded similar accolades to Foster. One elector gave Michael Spinks a perfect score.

Among the comments made by electors were:

"The old guys were better boxers. The new guys are better athletes. It's called boxing, isn't it?"

"There are some big punchers in this tournament. But it took Rocky Marciano 23 rounds to knock Ezzard Charles out so I don't think any of these guys would have done it. ... Moore had a greater career at 175 pounds than Charles did. But Charles had his number. ... I hate to pick against Archie Moore at 175 pounds. But I can't rewrite history so I'll pick Charles over Moore."

"Archie Moore didn't have the best chin in the world but he knew how to protect it and he knew how to disarm punchers. ... No modern-day fighter beats Archie Moore at 175 pounds. He knew all the tricks and fighters today don't know those tricks. ... I know Charles beat Moore three times. But a fighter has to prove himself every time. On Moore's best night, I'm going with Moore."

"Jones is the most athletically gifted one in the group. He would have given all of the others trouble. ... The question about Roy is his chin. He'd be beating a lot of these guys until he got hit. Then, who knows. ... Roy wouldn't have been able to fight these guys with his hands behind his back."

"Some of these fighters – especially Jones and Foster – had questionable chins. And all of them could whack. So the guys with questionable chins could have gotten knocked out at any point."

"I don't care who you were: If you weighed 175 pounds and Bob Foster hit you on the chin, you were in trouble. ... Foster lost to some great fighters. How many great fighters did he beat?"

"People don't realize how clever Michael Spinks was. He was old-school in a lot of ways."

"Billy Conn fought 76 times. He got stopped by some guy right after he turned pro. And the only fighter who knocked him out after that was Joe Louis. Most of the guys on your list could punch. But none of them could punch as hard as Joe Louis. ... Billy Conn had great footwork. He knew how to control distance with his legs and his legs were great. Styles make fights and Conn had the style to beat a lot of these guys. ... Conn weighed in at 169 pounds and was ahead of Joe Louis on the scorecards after 12 rounds."

"Kovalev hasn't shown that he's ready for this level of competition yet."

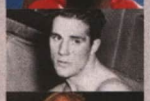
"I love Matthew Saad Muhammad. He was the most courageous fighter I've ever seen but I don't see him doing well in this tournament. He took what he had to take and always came back punching. But he was too easy to hit, and I don't think he could have taken the punishment that these guys were capable of handing out. ... Saad Muhammad was life and death with opponents who weren't nearly as good as the fighters on this list."

"They're in good company; all of them."

The charts here contain underlying statistical data from the tournament. The first chart shows that the trainers, matchmakers, media representatives and historians all ranked Charles in the No. 1 slot. There was a divergence of opinion after that.

The second chart shows how the panelists thought each fighter would have fared against the other seven. RING

## POINT TOTALS, OVERALL RANKING AND RANKING BY GROUPS OF EXPERTS

| | Name/Points | Overall Rank | Matchmaker Rank | Trainer Rank | Media Rank | Historian Rank |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | CHARLES 156 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| | MOORE 120 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| | JONES 104.5 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| | FOSTER 103.5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| | SPINKS 88 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 4 |
|  | CONN 66 | 6 | 6 | 5 | 8 | 6 |
| | KOVALEV 48 | 7 | 8 | 4 | 6 | 7 |
| | MUHAMMAD 42 | 8 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 8 |

## HEAD-TO-HEAD TOTALS

| - | VS. CHARLES | VS. CONN | VS. FOSTER | VS. JONES | VS. KOVALEV | VS. MOORE | VS. MUHAMMAD | VS. SPINKS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CHARLES 154-24-4 | - | 23 | 19 | 18 | 25 | 25 | 23 | 23 |
| CONN 63-113-6 | 3 | - | 8 | 4.5 | 14 | 8.5 | 17 | 11 |
| FOSTER 101-76-5 | 7 | 18 | - | 16.5 | 18 | 7.5 | 22.5 | 14 |
| JONES 100-73-9 | 8 | 21.5 | 9.5 | - | 22.5 | 9.5 | 20 | 13.5 |
| KOVALEV 44-130-8 | 1 | 12 | 8 | 3.5 | - | 2.5 | 13 | 8 |
| MOORE 116-58-8 | 1 | 17.5 | 18.5 | 16.5 | 23.5 | - | 25.5 | 17.5 |
| MUHAMMAD 39-137-6 | 3 | 9 | 3.5 | 6 | 13 | .5 | - | 7 |
| SPINKS 84-90-8 | 3 | 15 | 12 | 12.5 | 18 | 8.5 | 19 | - |

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book ("A Hurting Sport: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing") was published by the University of Arkansas Press.

HALL OF FAME
2016

# BETTER LATE ...

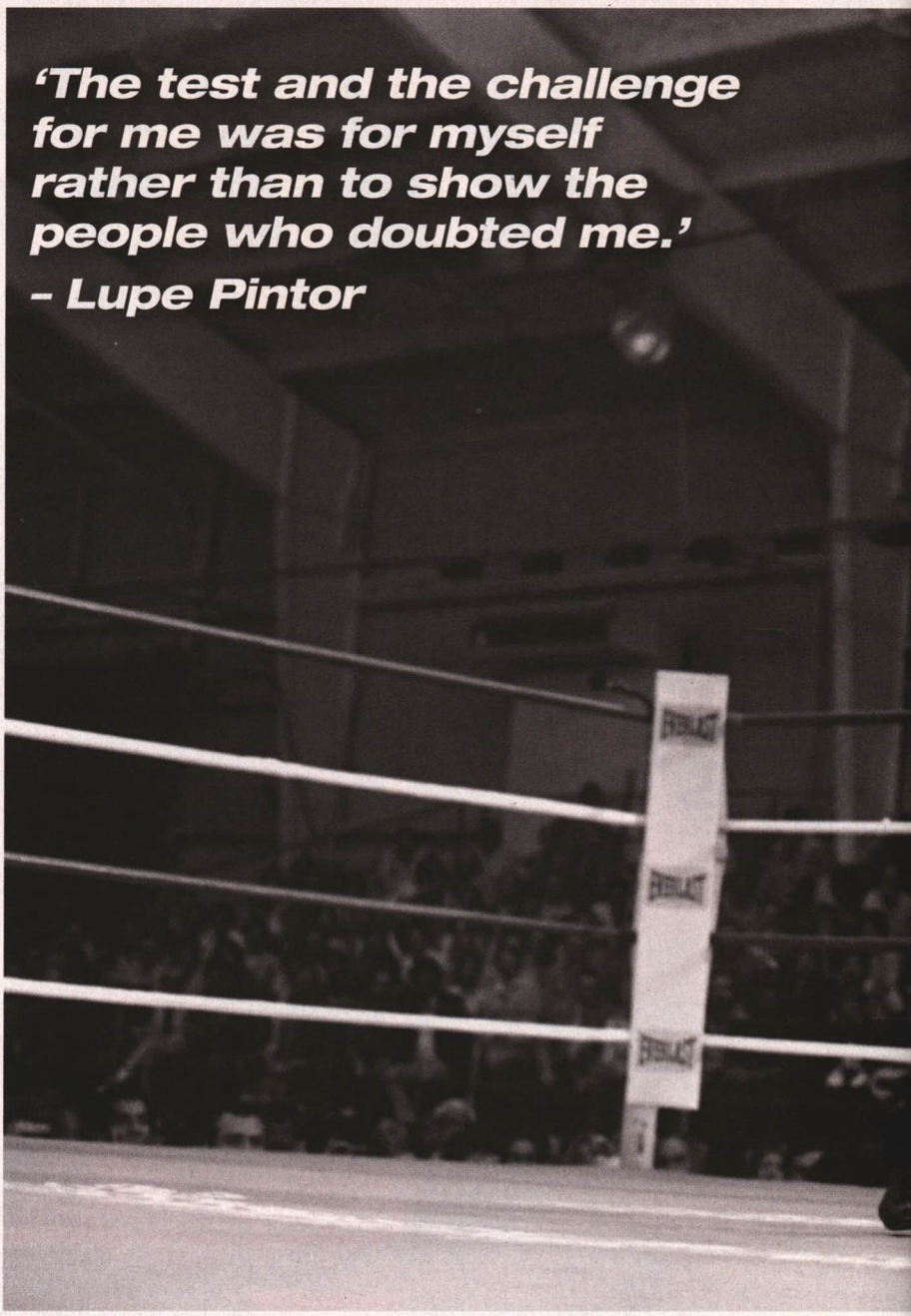
## LUPE PINTOR OVERCAME MAJOR CHALLENGES AND A TRAGEDY TO REACH THE HALL

By **Lee Groves**

Lupe Pintor, upon hearing that he will be inducted into the IBHOF: "It was a very special moment for me."

If any fighter knows about "delayed gratification," it's Lupe Pintor. He got off the canvas to dethrone Carlos Zarate by a split decision but the furor over the scoring was such that he wasn't considered a worthy bantamweight champion until later in his reign. Despite notching eight defenses over three years, many doubted his chances when he challenged fearsome junior featherweight champion Wilfredo Gomez. In that fight, Pintor overcame a slow start to raise grotesque swelling around Gomez's eyes and pushed the champion to near-exhaustion. Gomez won by a 14th-round TKO but many still consider Gomez-Pintor the greatest 122-pound title fight ever waged.

Many wondered if Pintor would ever recover from the motorcycle accident that forced him to vacate his 118-pound belt shortly after the Gomez loss. Pintor answered the doubters 14 months later by outpointing Ruben Solorio. More questions arose before he challenged WBC junior featherweight king Juan




Meza because of mixed results following the Solorio win. Again, Pintor rose from the ashes, scoring three knockdowns and capturing his second divisional title.

Pintor retired in 1995 following an ill-fated seven-fight comeback. He became eligible for Hall of Fame enshrinement in 2001 but his name didn't appear on the ballot until more than a decade later. And even then he was bypassed several times. But once again, Pintor landed in the winner's circle and this time his prize was immortality.

Last December, the International Boxing Hall of Fame announced Pintor would join Hector Camacho and Hilario Zapata as Modern inductees.

"I was in my home when (WBC president) Mauricio Sulaiman called and asked me to come to his brother Hector's office," Pintor, a resident of Mexico City, said through his son Diego. "That is where I – along with several important people in the WBC – was given the news. It was a very special moment for me."

When asked whether the long wait bothered him, he shrugged it off just as he had countless punches.

"I was never annoyed," he said. "I know that each member that enters the Hall of Fame is meticulously selected by a group of experts. The time wasn't right but now I am very grateful to receive this. My boxing career was always based on discipline and effort, which showed in the ring in every one of my fights. Despite the fractures in the motorcycle accident, I found a way to keep fighting and working to achieve my goals. In this case, it was my second title. So the test and the challenge for me was for myself rather than to show the people who doubted me, and I have since achieved it with perseverance and dedication."

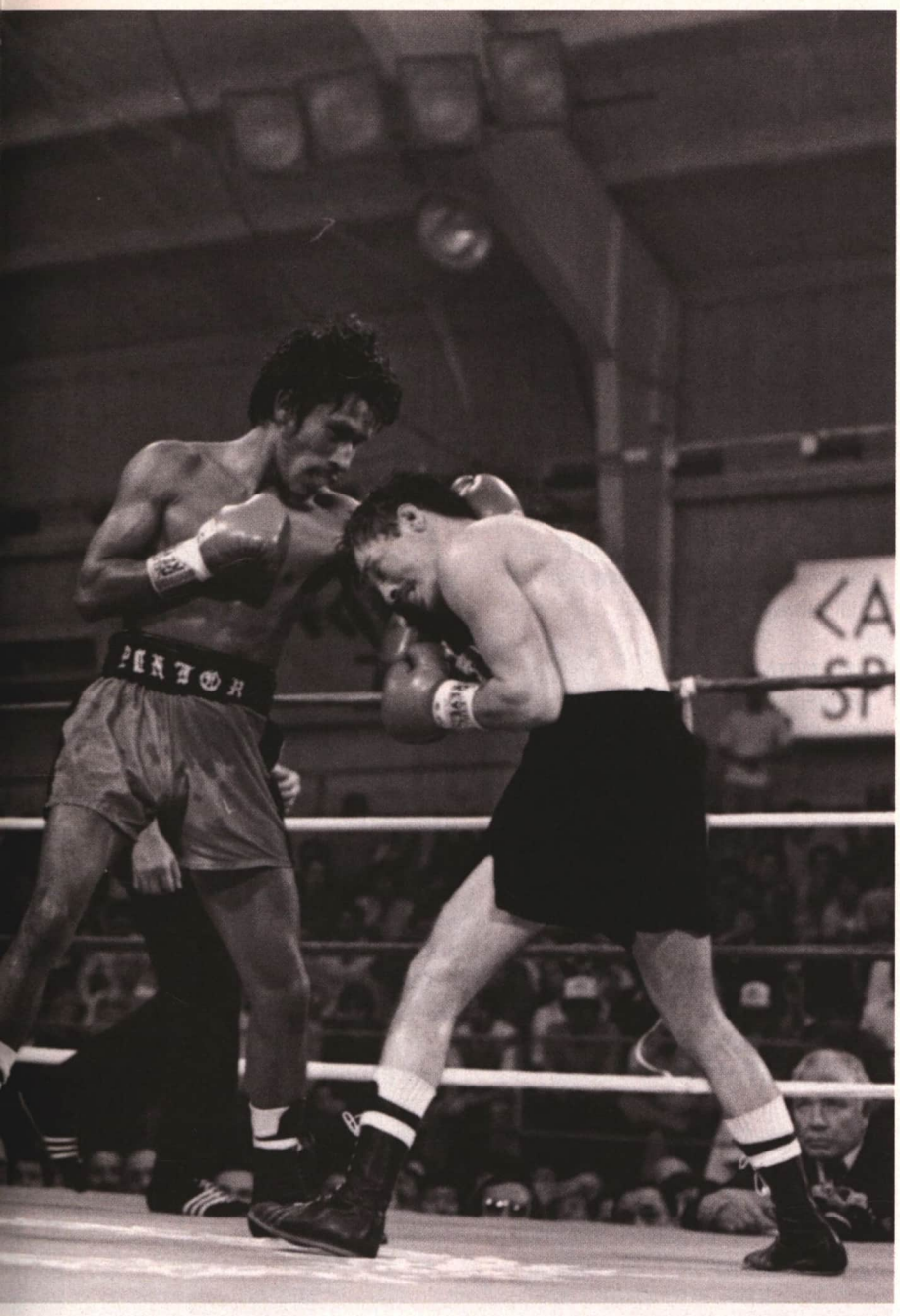
Pintor needed every ounce of both to topple Zarate, whose iron fists had recorded nine successful defenses – all by KO – and crafted an intimidating record of 54-1 (53 knockouts). Pintor's familiarity with his stablemate eliminated any fear factor and enabled him to focus solely on the task.

"The mission was to win the championship," Pintor said. "I knew that it would not be easy since Zarate was one of the best boxers in the division. But with determination and preparation I made a great fight."

Pintor overcame a fourth-round knockdown and then produced a stirring stretch drive that forced Zarate to navigate the 15-round distance for the only time in what would be a 70-fight career. Judge Bob Martin saw Zarate a 145-133 winner but was overruled by Harold Buck and Art Lurie's 143-142 scores for Pintor, whose swollen face beamed as he was lifted onto his handler's shoulders.

"I remember that moment as if it were yesterday," Pintor said. "I was rather battered but I remember seeing how tired and similarly damaged Zarate was. When the referee raised my hand, I was filled with such

RING MAGAZINE



**Pintor (left) won his rematch with the capable Alberto Davila in 1980.**

pride knowing I had managed to get the world championship. It was a moment I will never forget."

Zarate was so disgusted with the decision that he quit the ring for 6½ years. Pintor responded with vitriol to Zarate's post-fight protestations but years later hard feelings were softened.

"After several years Zarate and I talked about what happened," he said. "We don't exactly call each other friends but we both work within the same industry now. Our relationship is a courteous working one but nothing else."

Promoter/matchmaker and 2001 IBHOF inductee Don Chargin witnessed Pintor at his zenith. He was the matchmaker for six of Pintor's seven fights at Los Angeles' Olympic Auditorium, three of which were defenses against Alberto Sandoval, Johnny Owen and Seung-Hoon Lee. Chargin knew Pintor was talented but his regard for him soared once he began working with him.

"I had seen films of him before he fought for us and I was really anxious to see him because he was a real talent," Chargin recalled. "Then, when I got to know him, I was happier still. He had a good personality and cooperated with us from the start. A lot of fighters, after they get a good name, they forget what got them there, like meeting a lot with the press. But Lupe was always very cooperative. He was always smiling and good to be around. I always looked forward to it when we had him on our shows because he always went in and gave his best in the fights. He was an all-around talent, a terrific body-puncher and, in his own way, he was clever. People don't realize it, but he didn't get hit a lot."

Pintor's first defense was against Sandoval, a flashy and popular Mexican-American who won with speed and quick-fisted flurries but would go toe-to-toe when necessary. The blend of styles – and cultures – was promising.

"It was a hot fight for L.A. because Sandoval was a headliner at the Olympic and, with the fight pairing a local Mexican-American vs. a Mexican national, those were the fights we strived for because they would outdraw everything," Chargin said. "A lot of people picked Sandoval to beat him because they were high on him. Plus, you beat a legend like Zarate and even if you deserved (to beat him) they were so wrapped up in Zarate they thought Lupe got a gift."

Though Sandoval enjoyed flashes of success, Pintor's strength and power were the difference in the fight. At the time of the 12th-round TKO, Pintor led 110-102, 110-98 and 109-103.

After drawing with Eijiro Murata in Japan, Pintor returned to the Olympic to fight Owen, whose skeletal frame begat his colorful nickname, "The Merthyr Matchstick."

"To look at Owen, he was even more than being skinny, he was the

frailest-looking kid you ever saw in your life," Chargin said. "People told me he could fight but to me he was just bone."

Owen's frame concealed a ferocious fighting spirit. The fight was competitive for a while but after Pintor scored a ninth-round knockdown his heavier fists wreaked tremendous external – and internal – damage. Pintor floored Owen late in the 12th but he got up. A few seconds later, however, a right to the head caused the Welshman to crumple to the floor. He never regained consciousness and died 46 days later.

"It was terrible," Chargin said. "His dad was with him and his mother came over. He was in a coma for quite a while. We were at the hospital nearly every day and Lupe came a few times before he had to go back to Mexico."

Said Pintor: "They were very difficult times since, in this sport, that can happen to any of us. I was fortunate enough to have had the support of people specializing in this type of situation, which helped me to overcome it little by little."

Years later, Owen's father, Dick, traveled to Mexico to meet Pintor and Pintor was in Wales when a statue of Owen was unveiled 22 years after their fateful bout. The positive reception he received was therapeutic.

"Today I still remember it but I've made peace with myself," Pintor said. "I feel that he was one of the best boxers who could share a boxing ring. The fight showed that he was a great fighter, a warrior, and he had the right to receive that opportunity. He deserves all the respect and admiration from the boxing media for the tenacity and value he showed in the ring that night. Johnny's memory will live with me all my life but I've come to understand that everything has a reason and I feel that the spirit of Owen accompanies me every day, takes care of me and allows me to move forward in life."

Pintor returned exactly three months later and avenged an earlier

## HALL OF FAME: CLASS OF 2016

### MODERN

**HECTOR CAMACHO**
**ACTIVE:** 1980-2010
**RECORD:** 79-6-3 (38 KOs)
**BACKGROUND:** "Macho" perhaps is best known for flamboyance but make no mistake: The gifted southpaw could fight, particularly in the first half of his career. The three-division world titleholder used an unusual combination of speed and skills to beat an impressive list of quality opponents, including Bazooka Limon, Jose Ramirez, Edwin Rosario, Cornelius Boza-Edwards, Ray Mancini and Vinny Pazienza – all between 1983 and 1990.

**LUPE PINTOR**
**ACTIVE:** 1974-95
**RECORD:** 56-14-2 (42 KOs)
**BACKGROUND:** Pintor was a swarming action fighter who delighted fans and got results. The product of Mexico City won world titles in two divisions, defeating along the way such respected fighters as Carlos Zarate and Albert Davila. He also gave a prime Wilfredo Gomez all he could handle in a 1982 classic in which he was stopped in 14 rounds, after which his career declined. He made an unsuccessful comeback in the 1990s.

**HILARIO ZAPATA**
**ACTIVE:** 1977-93
**RECORD:** 43-10-1 (14 KOs)
**BACKGROUND:** The Panamanian couldn't punch but he drove his opponents crazy with his long jab and elusiveness, which served him well: He won titles as both a junior flyweight and flyweight. He outpointed Shigeo Nakajima to win a 108-pound title and successfully defended eight times. Then, after a three-fight second reign at 108, he outpointed Alonzo Gonzalez to win a 112-pound belt and successfully defended five times.

### OLD-TIMER

**PETEY SARRON**
**ACTIVE:** 1924-39
**RECORD:** 103-23-12 (25 KOs)
**BACKGROUND:** The most accomplished fighter ever from Alabama fought the best in an era deep with talent and usually came out on top. His greatest victory came in 1936, when he outpointed fellow Hall of Famer Freddie Miller to win the featherweight title. He went 2-4 against Miller overall, with both wins in championship fights. He lost his belt to the great Henry Armstrong (by sixth-round knockout) in 1937.

### NON-PARTICIPANT

**WHITEY ESNEAULT**
**POSITION:** Trainer
**BACKGROUND:** "Mr. Whitey" imparted his mastery of the fundamentals out of his New Orleans gym for a half century. He worked with Ralph Dupas and Willie Pastrano, among many others.

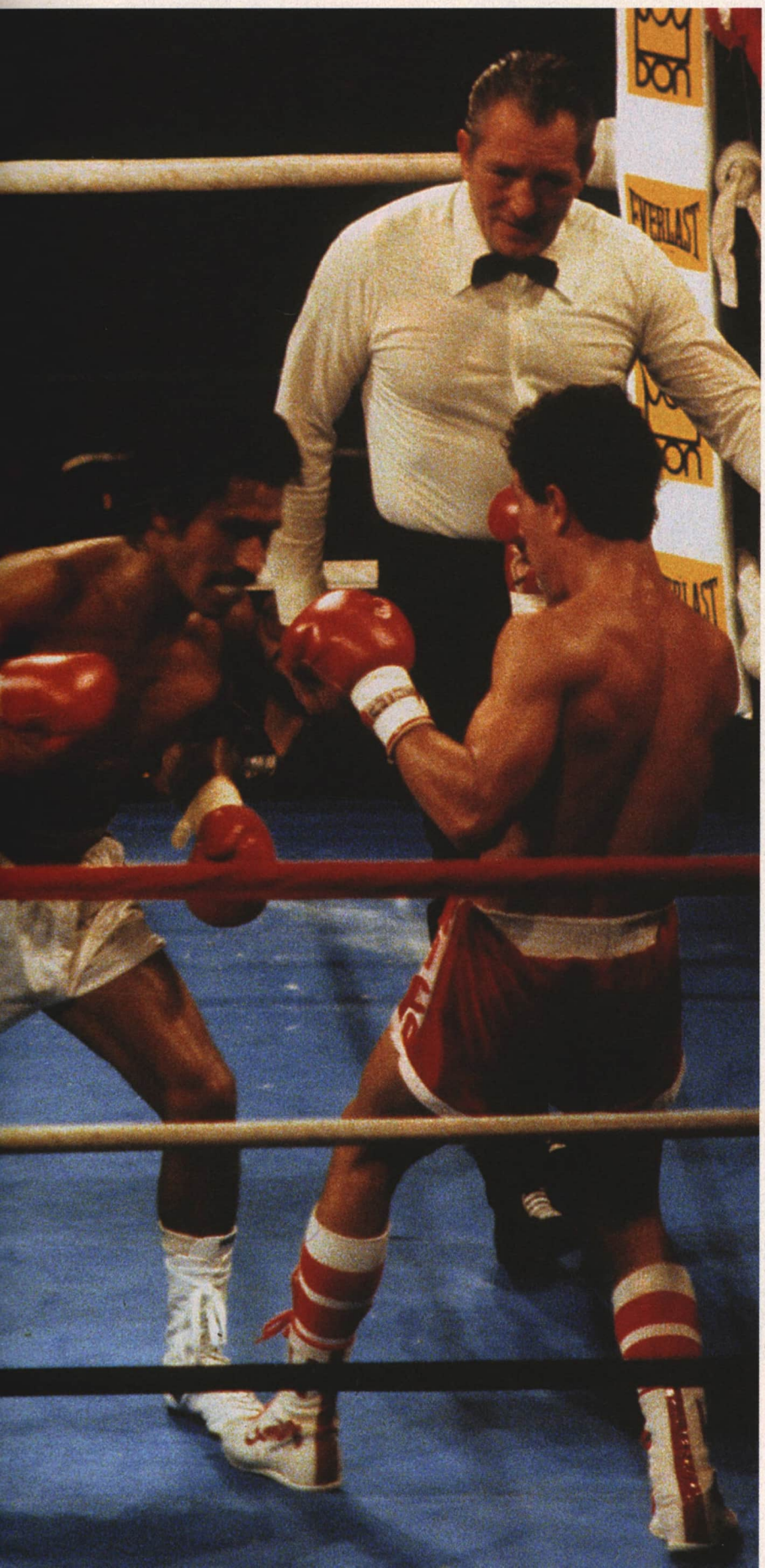
**HAROLD LEDERMAN**
**POSITION:** Judge/broadcaster
**BACKGROUND:** Lederman was a respected judge out of New York, working more than 100 title fights before becoming HBO's popular "unofficial" judge on countless broadcasts.

**MARK RATNER**
**POSITION:** Official
**BACKGROUND:** Ratner was the longtime executive director of the Nevada Athletic Commission, where he gained a reputation for competence and integrity.

### OBSERVER

**JERRY IZENBERG**
**POSITION:** Writer
**BACKGROUND:** The longtime columnist with the Newark Star-Ledger and author of 10 books retired in 2007 as one of the top sports writers in the United States.

**COL. BOB SHERIDAN**
**POSITION:** Broadcaster
**BACKGROUND:** Sheridan found his niche as the lead voice on international broadcasts, adding excitement to every card he worked with his passion and energy.




**Pintor (left) acquitted himself well against Wilfredo Gomez in 1982.**

defeat to Alberto Davila by a hard-fought decision. He then won five in a row – including four successful title defenses – to set up the Gomez showdown. Despite losing, Pintor was proud of his effort.

"The fight with Gomez was one of the best I had in my whole career," he said. "I was excited because I had prepared mentally and physically to the maximum. The fight was very close and was a true battle of gladiators."

Shortly after the Gomez fight, Pintor had the motorcycle accident, which dislocated his jaw and caused other injuries. But Pintor persisted and eventually earned the title shot against Meza in Mexico City.

That was Pintor's last major victory. Billy White stopped him in a non-title bout, after which Pintor defended against Samart Payakaroon. Pintor surrendered the belt after weighing in three pounds over the 122-pound limit and then was flattened in five. He returned eight years later, going 2-5, before retiring for good.

Chargin said Pintor's place in history is secure.

"He wasn't as flamboyant as Zarate and (Ruben) Olivares but he was a good, steady workman that was very pleasing to watch," he said. "If Zarate and Olivares were 'A' fighters, then Lupe was 'A-minus' because he was that close to them. I know this by seeing them all many times. If they each fought each other three times, you wouldn't know who was going to come out on top each time."

With his induction, Pintor won't have to worry about competing against Zarate, Olivares or the rest of the Mexican greats. United by skill and perseverance, they now are on the same team, even if Pintor had to wait longer than the rest to join. RING

MAGAZINE
HEAVYWEIGHT
CHAMPION
TYSON
FURY

# WANTED: CHAMPIONS

## THE RING MAGAZINE HAS ONLY FOUR TITLEHOLDERS IN 17 DIVISIONS. HERE ARE THE CHANCES WE CAN FILL THE REMAINING 13 SLOTS.

By **Doug Fischer**

Tyson Fury is the latest and one of only four RING champions.

THE RING Magazine currently recognizes four fighters as champions in their respective divisions: Tyson Fury at heavyweight, Canelo Alvarez at middleweight, Roman Gonzalez at flyweight and Donnie Nietes at junior flyweight.

It's believed to be the lowest number of RING champions since the magazine reinstated its championship policy in 2002.

There are reasons for this. In some cases, vacancies were created when the champion elected to campaign in another weight class. Terence Crawford, who held the RING lightweight title, recently moved up to junior welterweight. Danny Garcia, who had held the RING junior welterweight title since 2013, moved up to welterweight.

Other cases are more complicated. Originally, the only way a RING title could be vacated is when a fighter moved to another weight class or retired. However, in 2012 new stipulations were added to the championship policy, among them rules that state that the RING title will be vacated if the champion does not schedule a fight in any weight class for 18 months or if the champion does not schedule a fight with a Top-5 contender from any weight class for two years.

Andre Ward, Yoan Pablo Hernandez and Adonis Stevenson were stripped of the RING (super middleweight, cruiserweight and light heavyweight) titles last year for inactivity and a lack of quality opponents. Guillermo Rigondeaux was stripped of the junior featherweight title for the same reasons earlier this year.

The Editorial Board and Ratings Panel held off on vacating the 122-pound title because many top junior featherweights refused to face Rigondeaux. The culture of avoidance is a reality of modern boxing, and oftentimes it goes beyond the wishes and control of the fighters. The four major sanctioning organizations (IBF, WBA, WBC and WBO) do not rank the titleholders of the other "alphabet bodies" (yes, that means that because Roman Gonzalez holds the WBC title, the IBF, WBA and WBO don't rank him).

And the power brokers of the sport are often at odds. Al Haymon, the de facto promoter who advises close to 200 boxers – including dozens of contenders and titleholders – is being sued by the two biggest promotional companies in the U.S., Golden Boy Promotions and Top Rank. Haymon also has "uneasy" relationships with HBO, Main Events and Roc Nation. HBO and Showtime, the U.S. cable networks synonymous with boxing for the last 30 years, seldom work together. It took five years for the competing networks and squabbling promoters to put on the Floyd Mayweather Jr.-Manny Pacquiao mega-event and there was

a billion dollars on the line. So what chance does Sergey Kovalev-Adonis Stevenson have of being made?

What chance does any matchup that could fill a RING title vacancy have of being made in an age of promotional "Cold Wars" and network exclusivity?

Let's take a look at each division without a RING champ and assess the reality of the top contenders (ideally Nos. 1 and 2) fighting on a feasibility scale of 1-10 (10 being "a done deal" and 1 being "no chance.")

## CRUISERWEIGHT

**No. 1 Grigory Drozd**
**No. 2 Denis Lebedev**
**No. 3 Krzysztof Glowacki**
**Likelihood – 4**

★ The top two cruiserweights fight under the same promotional banner – Andre Ryabinskiy's World of Boxing – but, according to Lebedev's manager, Vadim Kornilov, there has never been any discussion about them fighting one another as the Russian beltholders are good friends. Lebedev, the WBA titleholder, is supposed to fight IBF beltholder Victor Emilio Ramirez sometime in late May. If successful, Kornilov says Lebedev will push for another unification bout with Glowacki, the WBO beltholder scheduled to defend against Steve Cunningham on April 16. If Lebedev and Glowacki are successful and do indeed fight, it's possible that their unification fight could be for the RING title. Another factor is that an injured Grigory Drozd is in danger of being dropped because of inactivity.

## LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

**No. 1 Sergey Kovalev**
**No. 2 Adonis Stevenson**
**Likelihood – 3**

★ There has been talk of these power-punching 175-pounders locking horns in the ring for more than two years (and according to some industry chatter, it's still going on) but the reality of their situation is that their promotional and network affiliations (Main Events and HBO with Kovalev; Yvon Michel/Haymon and Showtime with Stevenson) prevents this fight from happening.

## SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHT

**No. 1 Arthur Abraham**
**No. 2 James DeGale**
**No. 3 Badou Jack**
**Likelihood – 7**

★ Abraham is set to defend his WBO belt against Gilberto Ramirez on April 9. If the veteran loses to the unbeaten young contender (ranked No. 4 by THE RING), then he will drop from the No. 1 spot. DeGale and Jack, both of whom are advised by Haymon, are scheduled to co-headline a card on April 30. Jack defends his WBC title against former beltholder Lucian Bute and DeGale defends his IBF strap against Rogelio Medina. If they are successful, the two have verbally agreed to fight later in the year on Showtime, according to the network's head of boxing, Stephen Espinoza.

## JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHT

**No. 1 Erislandy Lara**
**No. 2 Austin Trout**
**Likelihood – 3.5**

★ There are no politics preventing this bout from happening; both fighters are advised by Haymon. But there is zero demand for a fight that would be a rematch of a one-sided and dreadfully boring unanimous decision won by Lara in December 2013. However, it appears likely that Trout will face Jermall Charlo (No. 5) and Lara will fight Vanes Martirosyan (No. 7) so the results could alter the ratings.

## WELTERWEIGHT

**No. 1 Kell Brook**
**No. 2 Manny Pacquiao**
**No. 3 Amir Khan**
**No. 4 Tim Bradley**
**No. 5 Keith Thurman**
**No. 6 Shawn Porter**
**Likelihood – 4.5**

★ Pacquiao says he's hanging up his gloves after his third bout with Bradley on April 9. Khan might not return to welterweight regardless of what happens when he faces Canelo Alvarez for the middleweight title on May 7. And if he stays at 147, he is likely to drop in the ratings because he hasn't fought there since outpointing Chris Algieri last May. Pacquiao and Khan's removal from the Nos. 2 and 3 spots would create an opening for the winner of Thurman-Porter, which is due to take place on June 25. The promoter of Brook, Eddie Hearn of Matchroom Boxing, has a record of working with both Top Rank (which promotes Bradley) and Haymon (who represents Thurman and Porter) and the undefeated IBF titleholder is itching for a major fight this year.

## JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

**No. 1 Viktor Postol**
**No. 2 Terence Crawford**
**Likelihood – 7.5**

★ Crawford seemed headed to a July clash with former beltholder Ruslan Provodnikov on HBO but the rugged Russian recently inked a deal with Showtime and is scheduled to debut on the network (against John Molina) on June 11. That leaves the door open for Crawford to face fellow titleholder and Top Rank stablemate Postol in a WBC/WBO unification bout. Postol wants that fight, according to his manager, Kornilov, but the undefeated American says he's looking for bigger-name opponents. The problem for Crawford is that there aren't any big names in the 140-pound division and the standouts in the welterweight division are either advised by Haymon or have other plans for 2016. So the word in the industry – which isn't disputed by Top Rank CEO Bob Arum – is that Postol is in the running to face Crawford in late July (probably at The Forum in Inglewood, California).

## LIGHTWEIGHT

**No. 1 Jorge Linares**
**No. 2 Dejan Zlaticanin**
**Likelihood – 9**

★ This fight was actually made in early January (Zlaticanin is the mandatory challenger for the WBC title held by Linares) but Linares fractured his right hand in sparring in February, which has pushed it back. In the meantime, Zlaticanin will stay busy against WBC-rated Emiliano Marsili for the sanctioning

**The winner of the Keith Thurman (left)-Shawn Porter fight could one day soon fight for the RING title if things fall his way.**

organization's interim belt sometime in the spring. Linares, who underwent hand surgery, is expected to fight a non-title, 10-round tune-up bout in the summer to test his hand and knock off any ring rust, according to Roberto Diaz of Golden Boy Promotions, which represents the talented Venezuelan. Linares and Zlaticanin are expected to meet in the fall. When they do, THE RING 135-pound title will be on the line.

## JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHT

**No. 1 Takashi Uchiyama**
**No. 2 Francisco Vargas**
**No. 3 Takashi Miura**
**Likelihood – 3.5**

★ Uchiyama is scheduled to make the 12th defense of his WBA title against Jezreel Corrales on April 27. If the unbeaten Japanese veteran is successful, he may have to deal with a mandatory "unification" bout with the WBA "regular" beltholder Javier Fortuna (yes, a unification fight within the same sanctioning organization – only in boxing). Vargas is scheduled to defend his WBC belt against rugged veteran Orlando Salido on June 4. The unbeaten Mexico City native, who earned his title with a ninth-round TKO of Takashi Miura in THE RING's Fight of the Year for 2015, has told the media that he wants to unify major belts but if he beats Salido, there will be a lot of pressure from fans (and HBO) for him to face Miura again. There's a chance that Uchiyama could

begin to look his age (36) in his next few bouts and drop from the No. 1 spot, which would open up the talked-about Vargas-Miura rematch for THE RING's 130-pound title, but it's a slim one. Uchiyama doesn't appear to be slowing down and there's no guarantee that Vargas fights Miura this year (or gets past Salido).

## FEATHERWEIGHT

**No. 1 Vasyl Lomachenko**
**No. 2 Gary Russell Jr.**
**No. 3 Leo Santa Cruz**
**Likelihood – 6.5**

★ Lomachenko is tentatively scheduled to face former titleholder Nicholas Walters in his junior lightweight debut on June 11. If the fight takes place and Lomachenko is successful, the ultra-talented Ukrainian southpaw will probably remain at 130 pounds. If this happens, a unification bout between Russell (who is slated to defend his WBC title against Patrick Hyland on April 16) and Santa Cruz (who has agreed to defend his WBA belt against Carl Frampton in the late summer) would be for the vacant RING featherweight championship. Russell and Santa Cruz are both advised by Haymon. Russell, whose only loss is a decision to Lomachenko but only fought once in 2015, is in need of a major fight.

## JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHT

**No. 1 Guillermo Rigondeaux**
**No. 2 Carl Frampton**
**No. 3 Scott Quigg**
**Likelihood – 3.5**

★ The frustrating career of Rigondeaux, who missed an opportunity to fight unrated James Dickens on March 12 in England because of visa issues, remains in limbo. Frampton, who unified the IBF and WBA titles with a split decision over Quigg on Feb. 27, has agreed to step up to featherweight to challenge WBA beltholder Leo Santa Cruz in a "late summer showdown," according to Showtime, which will televise the bout. The WBA has declared that Frampton must face Rigondeaux on or before July 27 or risk being stripped of its 122-pound belt but it is unlikely that the Belfast star will follow that mandate. Frampton's manager, Barry McGuigan, has made no secret of his disinterest in a Rigondeaux fight and the fighter will likely remain at featherweight (where bouts against fellow Haymon-advised beltholders Gary Russell Jr. and Lee Selby can be made) whether he wins or loses against Santa Cruz. If Quigg opts to take the "Rigo challenge," the Editorial Board and Ratings Panel would deliberate on the merits of recognizing the winner as THE RING champ.

## BANTAMWEIGHT

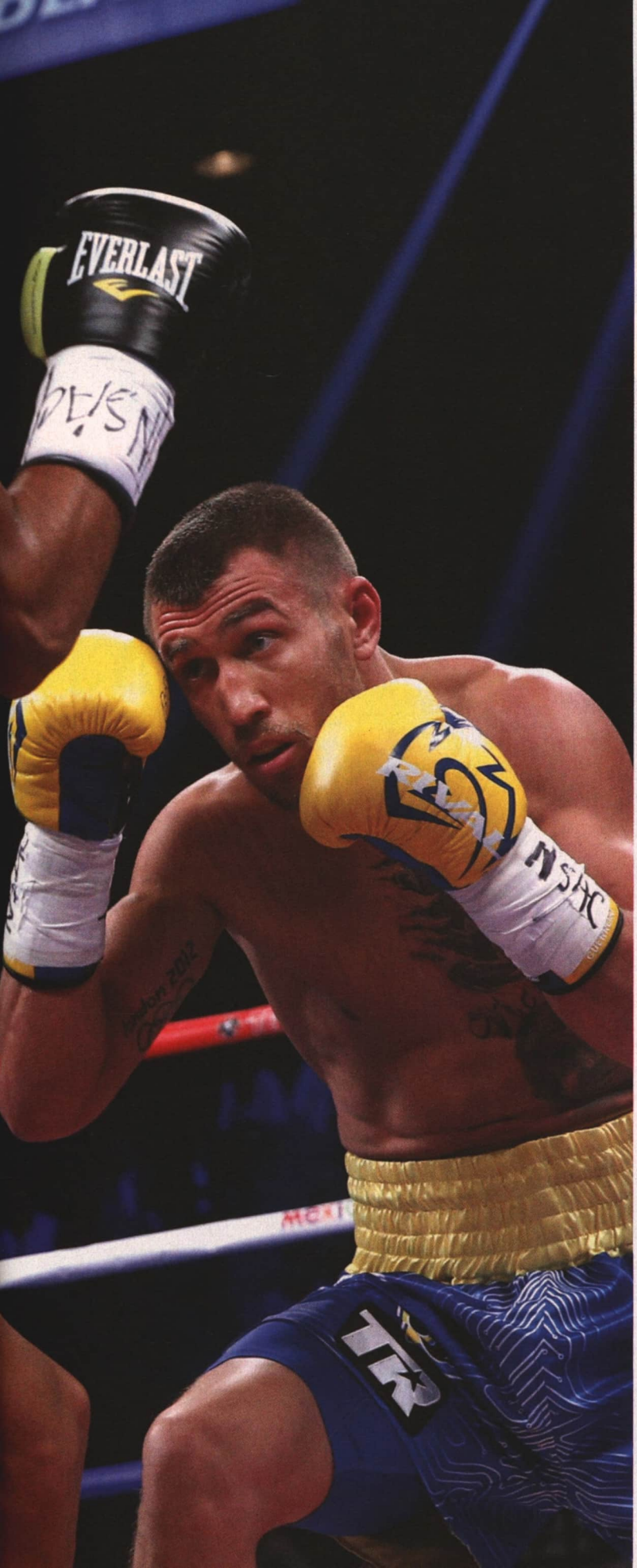
**No. 1 Shinsuke Yamanaka**
**No. 2 Juan Carlos Payano**
**No. 3 Anselmo Moreno**
**Likelihood – 5**

★ Yamanaka got up from two knockdowns to score a unanimous decision over Liborio Solis in the 10th defense of his WBC title on March 4. Payano, who has only fought once (a 12-round draw against prospect Rau'shee Warren last August) since his WBA title-winning upset over Moreno in September 2014, did not have a fight scheduled at press time but has been mandated to fight Jamie McDonnell. Moreno, the former titleholder who dropped a razor-thin split decision to Yamanaka last September, faces Suriyan Sor Rungvisai on April 30 in Moreno's native Panama. If Moreno wins, he will earn the No. 1 spot in the WBC and put himself in line for a rematch with Yamanaka. If he looks impressive, he could move into the RING's No. 2 spot, which would make a Yamanaka rematch a RING title bout. It's all possible but there are a lot of "ifs" in this scenario.

## JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHT

**No. 1 Naoya Inoue**
**No. 2 Carlos Cuadras**
**Likelihood – 3.5**

★ Inoue, the 22-year-old WBO beltholder who is coming off a two-round demolition of Warlito Parrenas, is expected to return in May for a rematch with veteran Omar Narvaez, according to his promoter Hideyuki




**If No. 1-rated featherweight Vasyl Lomachenko moves up to 130 pounds, No. 2 Gary Russell Jr. and No. 3 Leo Santa Cruz could end up fighting for the 126-pound title.**

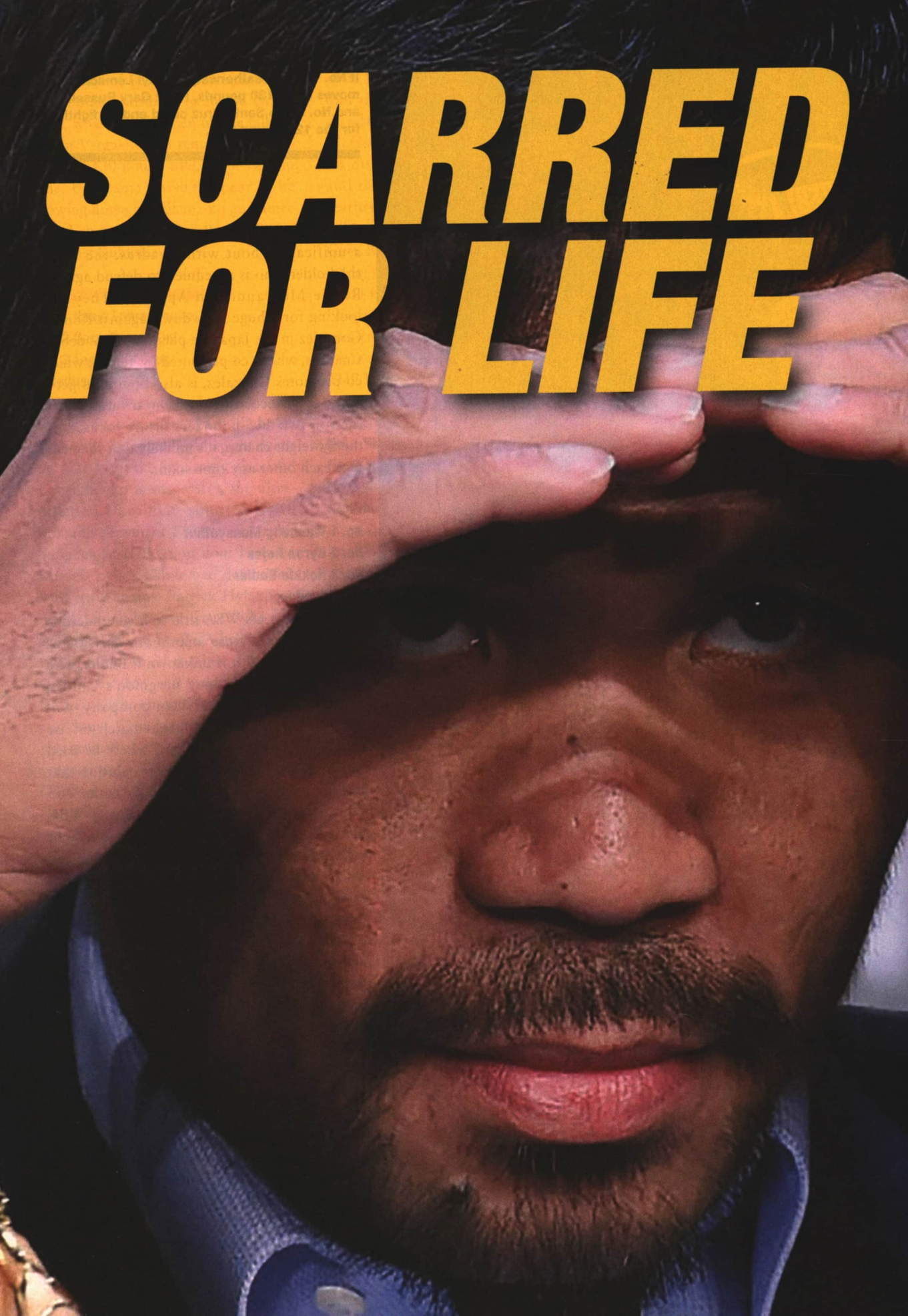
Ohashi. Inoue's handlers aren't interested in a unification bout with Cuadras, the WBC titleholder who is scheduled to defend against Richie Mepranum on April 23. They are looking for a huge showdown against Roman Gonzalez in the Japanese phenom's U.S. debut. Cuadras, who is co-promoted by Teiken, which co-promotes Gonzalez, is also hoping to get a crack at "Chocolatito" in the near future. With the top two 115-pounders firmly focused on the flyweight champ, it's unlikely that they will face each other any time soon.

## STRAWWEIGHT

**No. 1 Wanheng Menayothin**
**No. 2 Byron Rojas**
**No. 3 Hekkie Budler**
**Likelihood – 2.5**

★ Budler lost his WBA title to huge underdog Byron Rojas via close unanimous decision as we went to press. It is unknown if Budler, who is promoted by Rodney Bergman's Golden Gloves, a top South African company, will fight Rojas in an immediate rematch or rise in weight to junior flyweight, where he used to campaign. (There is some speculation that Budler has begun to struggle to make 105 pounds.) Menayothin, the unbeaten WBC beltholder since 2014, did not have a fight scheduled at press time. The 30-year-old Thailand native has never fought outside of his home country and his promoter Siu Nao doesn't seem eager to do business outside of Thailand (even though better financial opportunities can be found in Japan). Regardless of Budler's immediate future, the South African standout and his Nicaraguan conqueror do not generate enough money to entice Menayothin to leave Thailand for a unification bout.

So while the politics and business side of boxing will likely prevent the top fighters in many divisions from fighting for the RING title, there is an even-or-better chance that the championship vacancies will be filled in the competitive and popular weight classes of bantamweight, featherweight, lightweight, junior welterweight and super middleweight.


SCARRED
FOR LIFE

# MANNY PACQUIAO WILL BE REMEMBERED AS A GREAT FIGHTER AND, SADLY, A HOMOPHOBE

By **Norm Frauenheim**

Manny Pacquao apologized for his anti-gay comments but the damage was done.

Manny Pacquiao means things to more people than he could have ever imagined or probably wanted. He's a modern version of the People's Champ, which these days can be turned, twisted, trampled and tweeted into something as unexpected as it is unrecognizable.

Yet here he is, near the end of a boxing career that has gone from undisputed championships to widespread condemnation. From icon to infamy, from hero to homophobe, it's been one strange trip.

Who's to blame? There's plenty of that to go around. There are his enablers. Lots of them. Then there are those always looking for ways to further political and cultural agendas. Whole lot of them, too. There are national differences and different dialects. There are kooks and crazies, too.

***'It's common sense. Do you see animals mating with the same sex? Animals are better because they can distinguish male from female. If men mate with men and women mate with women they are worse than animals." - Manny Pacquiao***

Yet in the end, Pacquiao has only himself to blame. His comments in mid-February to Filipino media about homosexuality – saying it was "worse than animals" – ignited a global controversy that figures to follow him regardless of whether he continues to fight or moves full-time into the political arena.

There's been plenty of debate about whether it will damage his legacy as a boxer. But history proves that's hard to do. From Sonny Liston to Mike Tyson and a rogue's gallery full of so many more, damage is part of boxing's perverted charm. Neither a Liston nor a Tyson ever shared any of Pacquiao's aspirations, however.

The congressman is running for the Filipino Senate. He wants to be president. Anybody who has ever been to one of his news conferences knows he wants people to like him. That's his refrain. He needs their approval. Votes, too.

A Liston or a Tyson just wanted a jury of their peers to vote "not guilty." Pacquiao's fate rests in the court of public opinion. That's hard to predict and harder to control. When Pacquiao arrived in Los Angeles from the Philippines for the final few weeks of training for his third fight with Tim Bradley, he walked through LAX's crowded international terminal to a waiting car like a presidential candidate.

He answered questions about Bradley. He answered questions about sparring and conditioning. But questions abut his comments on gay sex? They were shouted above the noise of the crowd. Pacquiao ignored them as if he never heard them.

He tried to sidestep them again a few days later at longtime trainer Freddie Roach's Wild Card Boxing Club. He asked that the focus stay on the fight. But it was impossible. Boxing's crossover star means his celebrity has an audience more interested in the fight he created with his comments.

"I was misquoted," he finally told Lance Pugmire of the Los Angeles Times. "If you watch and listen to the whole interview, it's not only one or two minutes. It's five to 10 minutes. If you watch the whole interview, you would understand it. The context was lost. I want people to watch the whole interview."

In the twitter era of 140 characters, however, they'll remember only

the reference to animals and the subsequent apologies that seemed to underscore Pacquiao's belief – deeply rooted in his born-again faith – that same-sex marriage is wrong.

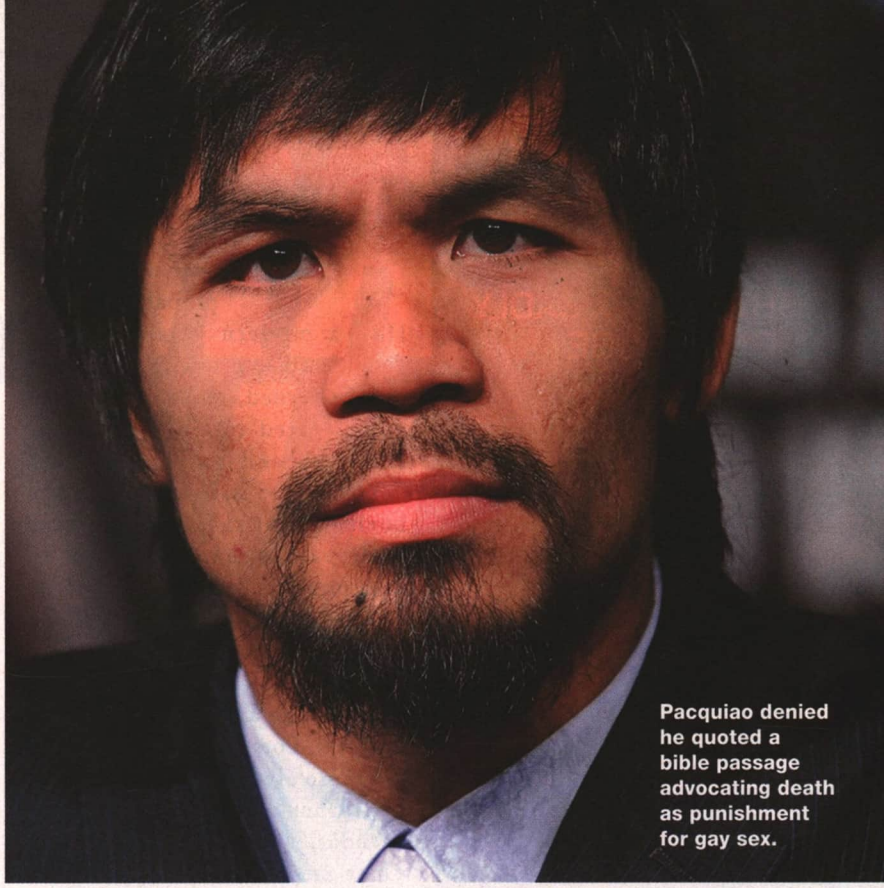
What was meant to be a quick apology on his Instagram account included a biblical quotation from Leviticus 20:13: "If a man has sexual relations with a man as one does with a woman ...They are to be put to death."

The post was quickly taken down. In the digital universe, however, it never really goes away. It was just more virtual fuel for controversy that actually has its genesis in 2012. That's when a Filipino journalist wrote about Pacquiao's opposition to same-sex marriage and referred to the Leviticus quote. American media, including USA Today and the Village Voice, picked it up and reported it as if Pacquiao believed that gays should be put to death.

"I didn't say that, that's a lie," Pacquiao said then. "I didn't know that quote from Leviticus because I haven't read the Book of Leviticus yet."

But somebody with access to his Instagram account read Leviticus enough at least to post the quote that propelled controversy into outrage within the LGBT community. Even Pacquiao's longtime promoter, Bob Arum, chimed in, calling Pacquiao's comments "reprehensible" and defending Nike when it terminated the welterweight's endorsement deal in a move that showed free speech isn't always so free.

It also was a sure sign that in the wake of the Supreme Court's 2015 ruling in favor of same-sex marriage in the United States, LGBT power in the corporate community has grown immensely.



Pacquiao denied he quoted a bible passage advocating death as punishment for gay sex.

Harder to judge, however, is what Pacquiao's comments have done to his popularity and political prospects at home. He is running for one of 24 at-large seats in the Filipino Senate. Before the comments, he was eighth in polling. In a Pulse Asia poll about a month after the comments, he had fallen to 14th.

But it's not clear whether the decline is linked to the controversy. Pacquiao wasn't able to campaign for the May 9 election because of training for the Bradley bout. What's more, same-sex marriage is not legal in the Philippines.

"If everything goes well, I think he'll be elected to the Senate and I really don't think Filipinos are the kind of people who will be influenced by whether he wins or loses the fight," Arum said before the Bradley rematch. "He'll remain an extraordinary star there regardless.

"What he said was inappropriate. But his belief that he's against same-sex marriage is an opinion he's entitled to. Will it hurt him running in the Philippines? Remember, 70 percent of Filipinos are Roman Catholic and the other 30 per cent are even more stringent; they are evangelical Christians. I don't think it hurt him at all in the Philippines. His comments will have hurt him more in the United States, where we have pretty much accepted same-sex marriage."

A lingering question, however, is why he said it at all. Why oh why? Pacquiao is known for generosity but the comments about gay sex didn't display much in the way of political smarts expected of a senator, not to mention a would-be president.

There's also some grumbling about his record as a congressman. According to the Philippine Daily Inquirer, he had the House's worst attendance record in 2014. He showed up for work only four days. Notoriously absent U.S. Senator Marco Rubio, a former candidate for the Republican Party's presidential nomination, has a better attendance record.

Christopher Navalta, a longtime

***'As a Filipino-American, I do believe Manny's image has been damaged long-term.' - PR expert Christopher Navalta***

Pacquiao fan and Filipino-American in the public-relations business in the San Francisco Bay area, says his decline in the polls is a result of several things.

"At the height of Manny's professional career, there were talks of him running for president," said Navalta, who has clients in sports and technology. "Despite the fact that Manny never completed his high school education, there was no question that he would be a difficult opponent to beat if he threw his hat into a presidential race. That was at the height of his boxing career.

"Since his loss to Floyd Mayweather, and since his controversial remarks have tainted his international reputation, his popularity in the polls are simultaneously falling. As a congressman, he was fairly inactive. He only showed up for work at the Philippine House of Representatives a handful of days. And when he did show up, he approached it as his second job."

There was a backlash of angry support for Pacquiao in the immediate aftermath of Nike's announcement that it had dropped him for comments it called "abhorrent."

There were photos of Pacquiao fans staging bonfires. From Manila to General Santos City, Nike shoes, shirts, shorts and anything else bearing the Swoosh went up in smoke. There were more than 18,000 people who hit the "Like" button before the Instagram message with the Leviticus quote was deleted.

A Filipino senator from an opposing political party, Juan Ponce Enrile, supported Pacquiao's opposition to same-sex partners. The Filipino media quoted Enrile as saying: "It's better for them to go to planet Mars."

But some well-known Filipinos also criticized him. Filipina singer and actress Lea Salonga mocked him.

"Homosexuality is found in 450 species. Homophobia is found in only one. Which one seems unnatural now(?)" tweeted Salonga, whose many roles include the lead in the musical "Miss Saigon."

***'Homosexuality is found in 450 species. Homophobia is found in only one. Which one seems unnatural now(?)' - Filipina actress Lea Salonga***

Then Salonga corrected herself, but at Pacquiao's expense.

"Actually, homosexuality is practiced by around 1,500 species. Not 450. My bad," she tweeted.

Among some Filipinos, Pacquiao also became fair game for what else Leviticus says. To wit: "You shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead nor print or tattoo any marks upon you ... (Leviticus 19:28)."

It's not the first time Pacquiao's tattoos have put him in an awkward position. In 2010, negotiations for the Mayweather fight broke down because he balked at drug testing that would have included a blood draw. He said he was afraid of needles. He must have developed that fear while getting all those tattoos.

The question is whether the controversy will just fade away, especially if Pacquiao continues his career beyond Bradley and puts together a string of impressive victories. Despite different public attitudes about same-sex marriage, the Philippines and the United States are alike in one respect: Winning solves a lot of problems. But Navalta is skeptical.

"As a Filipino-American, I do believe Manny's image has been damaged long-term," he said. "For those who know Manny, they know that he is a very conservative Christian who does not believe in same-sex relationships. Even though the United States only recently approved of same-sex marriage nationwide, the Philippines is nowhere near that type of acceptance. Since he was speaking to a Filipino audience, he most likely wasn't thinking of how other people around the world would react to his words.

"In the United States, I do believe people will remember this about him for a long time. If he says the exact same words to an American journalist – in front of an American audience – now it's considered a hate speech.

"Once he retires, he will still be considered one of the greatest fighters of all time. When people speak about him, it will be primarily for his accomplishments in the ring, but it's getting to the point where his feelings on same-sex marriage will now be part of his legacy."

But Navalta is also optimistic that Pacquiao can make a turnaround. For many Filipinos and Filipino-Americans, he is a true-life Rocky. As a kid, Pacquiao sold bread on the streets and often fought for a few pesos to buy bread for himself.

He was alone in those fights. He's alone now, just as he was when he made all those millions in the ring. There was huge money and a nation full of adoring fans. At the opening bell, however, only he could fight Mayweather or Erik Morales or Oscar De La Hoya. At one level, he's in that kind of fight all over again. Only he can wage it. Win it.

"Fans, both Filipino and Filipino-American, will still regard him as a hero who came from nothing to become an international star," Navalta said. "Fortunately, Manny still has an opportunity to carve his legacy after boxing. He will continue to have a social responsibility to his people and he still has an opportunity to turn his political career around.

"Once he's done with boxing, he should really take the time to focus on the people of the Philippines, take his job seriously and show that his generosity is more than just handing out a few bucks to the poor. If he can instill real change, that will help his countrymen. There's no doubt he will still be in politics."

**Good amateurs like Antonio Vargas (left) of the U.S. could struggle against pros.**

# Prolympics?

## ALLOWING PROFESSIONAL BOXERS TO FIGHT IN THE GAMES WOULD BE A COLOSSAL MISTAKE

By **Tom Gray**

You are a fully committed amateur boxer who has invested 3½ years of your life for the opportunity to qualify for the Rio Olympics in 2016. The hard work, the loneliness, the physical sacrifice; all worth it for a fighting chance at representing your country on the biggest and most glorious stage of all.

Suddenly, just six months from a possible date with destiny, you learn that professional fighters have been granted the right to qualify. Not once since the sport was formally introduced at the St. Louis Games in 1904, not once in 25 tournaments, has a paid fighter swapped punches with an amateur in Olympic competition.

Curveball? More like a Mike Tyson uppercut to the point of the chin.

An International Boxing Association (AIBA) meeting convened on Feb. 24 in Manchester, England, out of which came a proposal for professional fighters to compete in the Olympics beginning in Rio de Janeiro this August. The boxing world at large thought it was some kind of strange publicity stunt or a joke – the only thing is, nobody was laughing.

"You just wonder if the AIBA realized how much money can be made from professional prizefighting and now it's all about getting a slice of the pie," said Steve Lillis, a British boxing pundit who works for BoxNation in the U.K.

"The AIBA deserve real credit for introducing the WSB (World Series of Boxing), which is a terrific tournament, but unfortunately it has not crossed over to mainstream audiences. They also launched the APB (AIBA Pro Boxing) format and that didn't take off either. Is the idea to bring professionals into the Olympics for sanctioning fees?"

Money is a tremendous motivator for radical change but this shake-up does not appear to be practical. A 10- or 12-round fighter would have to adjust to three 3-minute sessions. A professional accustomed to registering damage will be mixing with an amateur who has been exclusively coached to score points. And we haven't even discussed judging yet.

Regardless, more than one top professional has expressed interest in Rio 2016 and those who commit could have an opportunity to enter a WSB/APB qualifier in Sofia, Bulgaria.

"I've seen the likes of Manny Pacquiao and Tyson Fury talk about it but I really don't think they'll compete," Lillis said. "For me, it will be (pro fighters from) satellite states, central and eastern European countries who will be looking to attend. I can't see one British fighter entering and I would be disappointed if any of them did.

"If the AIBA were intent on introducing professionals, then the switch should have been for the Tokyo 2020 Olympics. Announce it, give everyone notice, take the complaints on board and discuss it rationally. The only way a professional should be allowed to compete in Rio is if they are not enjoying their pro careers and want to return to the amateur ranks."

Speaking of the amateur ranks, how many prospective Olympians would have moved into the professional game within the last four years had they known this change was in the pipeline? In retrospect, the career trajectory of several young fighters could have been vastly different had this situation been handled with a modicum of intelligence.

Team GB member Anthony Fowler took middleweight bronze at the World Championships in Almaty, Kazakhstan, in 2013 and would certainly be a medal hope for the U.K. should he qualify for Rio. The affable 24-year-old is obsessed with the tournament and has a blog page that has been charting his journey.

"If there's one fighter in Team GB who is made for the professional ranks it is definitely Fowler," Lillis said. "If Anthony had known there was the possibility that he had to fight someone like (Gennady) Golovkin to make the Olympic squad, then he could have turned professional two years ago, had 19 fights and been European champion by now.

"Joe Joyce, another big medal hope for Team GB, has had scores of fights in WSB competition over the past two years and will be taking part in the final super heavyweight qualifier. Would it make sense if he has to beat a former world champion like Alexander Povetkin, who has shown interest in taking part?"

Another issue is the possibility of a top pro hurting an amateur on the big stage. I once attended a Ricky Burns workout when a good amateur who had just won a tournament requested an opportunity to spar. Burns, then a WBO lightweight titleholder, would never dream of holding back in sparring and made strawberry jam of him.

The silence has been deafening among those who are directly involved with Rio 2016. Olympic boxing has the tendency to get political. Thus, opening your mouth at the wrong time may lead to problems down the road. After years of hard work, top amateurs will still pursue their day in the Rio sun but one has real sympathy for those affected by this proposal.

AIBA president Dr. Ching-Kuo Wu has acknowledged a desire for change but this looks to be a monumental error. As it stands, his decision, which is likely to be made formal in June, threatens to terminally extinguish annals of Olympic boxing history that several countries look back on with immense pride.

"I'm against professional fighters coming into the Olympics in any capacity," said Lillis with a sigh. "When you look back at top amateurs coming through ... take the great U.S. team from Los Angeles 1984 with Evander Holyfield, Pernell Whitaker and Mark Breland. The magic of all those wonderful times could never return.

"The big contracts that medal winners so richly deserve will go out the window and it could also have a knock-on effect in terms of the funding that has gone into developing high-quality Olympic talent."

On this evidence, Dr. Wu would do well to listen more and talk less. RING

## THE FACTS

Olympic boxing has been exclusively reserved for amateur fighters since it was originally introduced in 1904.

★

A proposal to allow professionals to compete in Olympic competition was made by The International Boxing Association (AIBA) on Feb. 24, 2016, in Manchester, England.

★

AIBA has called a meeting of its executives in early June to vote formally on the proposal.

★

Professionals would have to qualify in tournaments in order to be selected, just as amateurs do.

★

Some elite professionals have already displayed an interest in competing. Among them: Tyson Fury, Amir Khan, Wladimir Klitschko, Manny Pacquiao and Alexander Povetkin.

# PRESENT AT CREATION

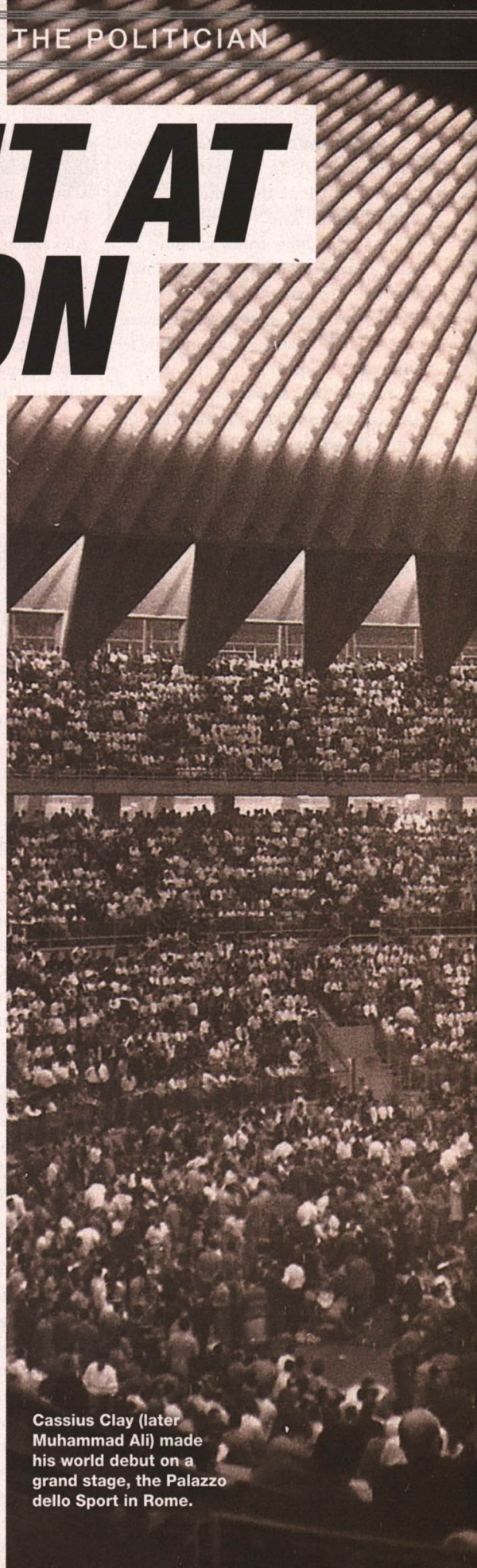
## WHEN CASSIUS CLAY RULED ROME

By **Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith**

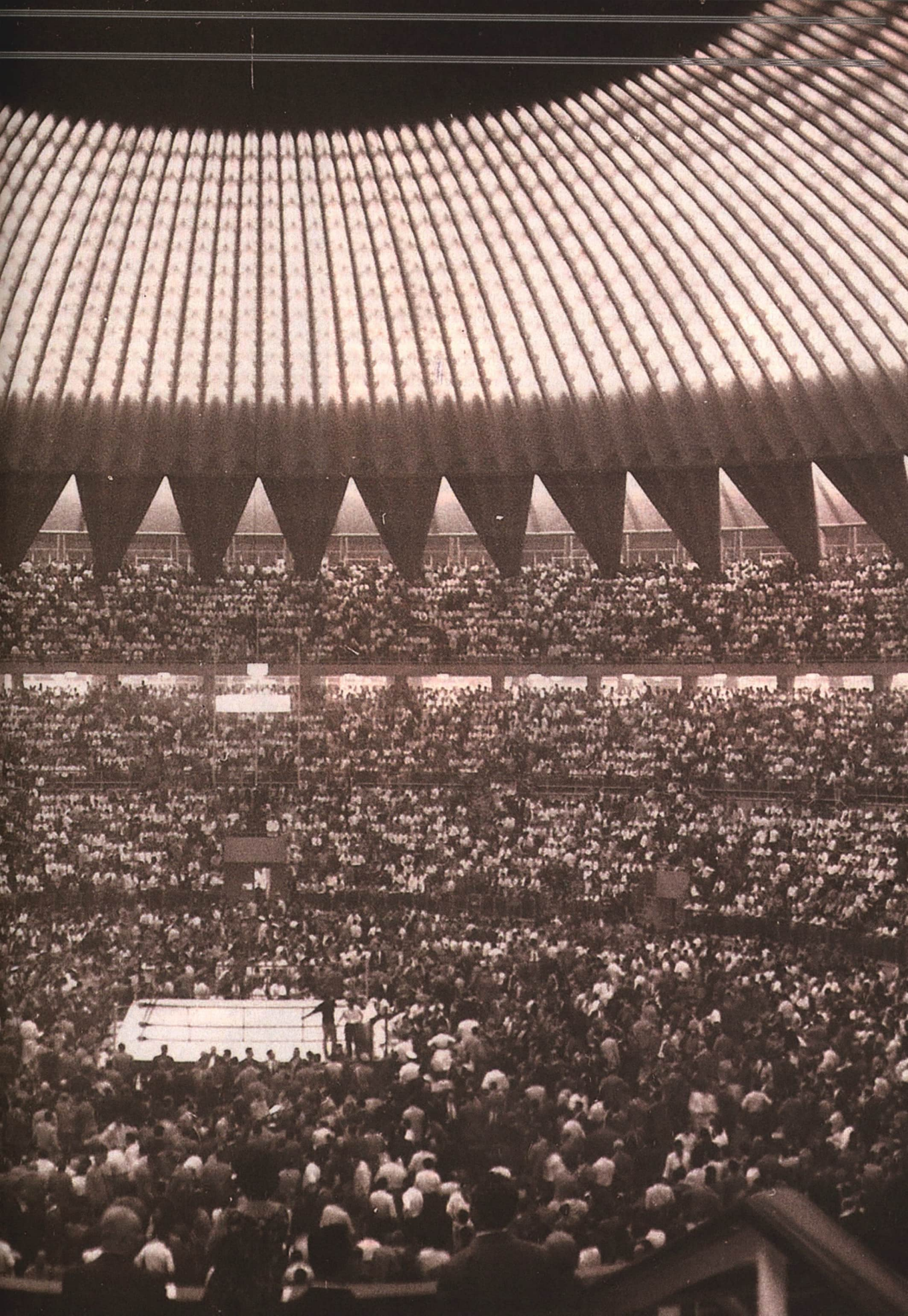
At the 1960 Rome Olympics, no American athlete embraced the world stage more than Cassius Clay. By equal measures loud and innocent, brash and endearing, he attacked the Olympic experience like an octopus, reaching in every direction and latching onto whatever he touched. The fastest way to meet athletes from other countries was through the exchange of Olympic national insignia pins. Clay excelled at the practice, ranging across the Olympic Village, engaging athletes from Africa, Asia, Australia, South America and Europe, assuming that if he spoke English loud enough he could make himself understood. Arthur Daley reported in his New York Times column that as far as swapping pins went, "the leader for the Olympic championship in this department is a handsome American light heavyweight boxer from Louisville. He has out-traded everyone in the compound. At least he has the most appropriate name of any contestant for these Roman Olympics. It is Cassius Marcellus Clay."

It wasn't just pins that energized Clay, it was the world the trinkets symbolized, a globe whose citizens were not ghettoized on the basis of class, religion or race. Ironically, he felt a freedom in a foreign land that he had never experienced in the United States. Unlike the streets of Louisville, he was free to roam the Olympic Village and the byways of Rome without fear of bigots or the police. One reporter observed that he was as "friendly and frisky as a puppy chewing a shoe" and spent most of his days before the start of competition walking, talking and taking pictures. Cassius interrupted an interview with a friendly journalist when he saw a group of Indian athletes. "Excuse me," he said, "gotta get some shots of those cats with the beards." The cultural activities were more tiring than fighting for the championship. "I am one tired man," he told Louisville correspondent Earl Ruby. "I don't think I ever was so tired before in my whole life. Even after a fight."

But the sight of a new world, the sense that he was present at the creation of a new order, was a heady elixir. Not only were the American quarters and the rest of the Olympic Village integrated, it seemed to Cassius that the natural racial order had undergone a dizzying topsy-turvy. "Without a doubt," wrote a black reporter for the Cleveland Call & Post, "but for the Negro athlete and his



Cassius Clay (later Muhammad Ali) made his world debut on a grand stage, the Palazzo dello Sport in Rome.



outstanding performances, this nation would have little or no chance in the games to be presented before the eyes of the world." The leaders of the American team, the athletes who attracted the most attention and were expected to win gold medals, were black. Rafer Johnson, Ralph Boston, Ray Norton and Wilma Rudolph in track and field; Oscar Robertson, Walt Bellamy and Bob Boozer in basketball; Wilbert McClure and Cassius in boxing. They moved about the Village like ebony gods, especially Rafer, Wilma and Cassius. If there was royalty at the Rome Olympics, they were it.

When Cassius Clay arrived in Rome he understood that the American Olympic team was fighting for something more than medals. Reporters, politicians and U.S. Olympic officials reminded the athletes that they represented America, democracy and meritocracy in action. Athletes represented countries and politicians squeezed political mileage out of their performances. This fundamental synergy between sports and politics had reached new and more intense levels during the Cold War. With the reentry of the Soviet Union into the Olympic fold in 1952, the Cold War struggle in the Games and other international competitions had heated up. The Games were no longer just games; the Olympics had become a battleground over ideological supremacy.

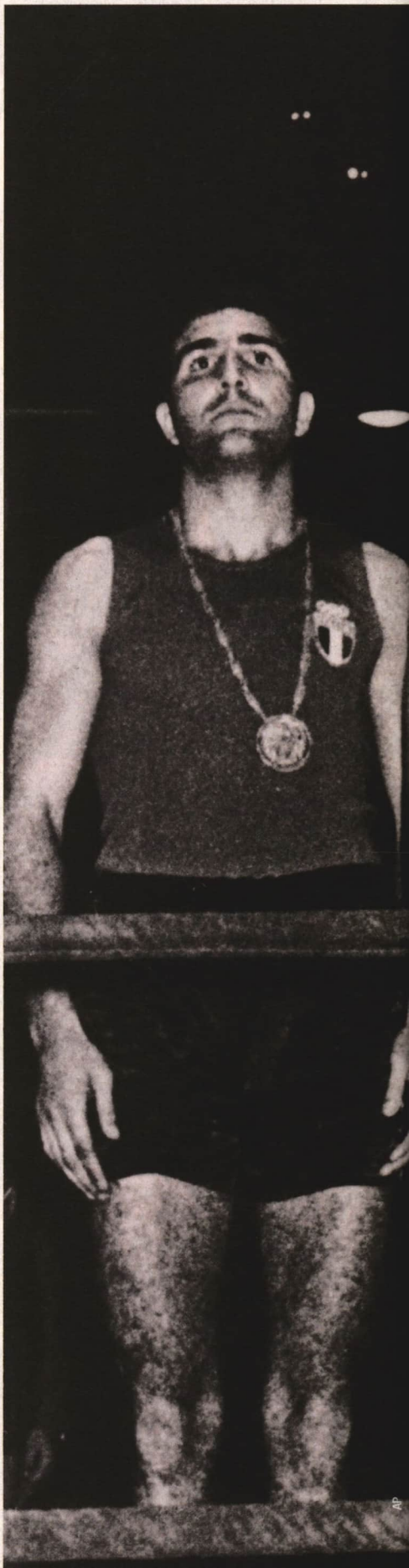
Race formed the front line in America's ideological battle against Russia. During the 1950s, Soviet news agencies covered stories about discrimination in the United States, news that undermined America's ability to promote democracy abroad. The bottom line was unavoidable: As long as white Americans discriminated against and systematically mistreated black Americans, influential Africans and Asians would associate the United States with the long tradition of Euro-American racism and colonialism.

During the 1950s, the State Department promoted the most famous black Americans – athletes, musicians, and entertainers – as goodwill ambassadors, symbols of America's racial progress. With the support of the United States Olympic Committee, the Eisenhower administration approached the Rome Games as a forum to combat the harmful, though accurate, impression of America's racial condition. The government coached Clay and other athletes about how to answer "sensitive" racial questions. The operative message they transmitted to the world was: Progress is being made in America.

By the government's definition, Clay was a model goodwill ambassador. As he related a year after the Rome Olympics, "This Commie cat comes up to me and says, 'Now how does it feel, Mr. Clay, that even though you got the gold medal you still can't go back to the U.S. and eat with the white folks because you're a colored boy?'" Cassius said he "looked him up and down once or twice," stood "tall and proud" and answered, "Tell your readers we've got qualified people working on that problem and I'm not worried about the outcome. To me, the U.S.A. is still the best country in the world, counting yours. It may be hard to get something to eat sometimes but anyhow I ain't fighting alligators and living in a mud hut."

"Poor old Commie," Cassius recalled, "he went dragging off without nothing to write the Russians."

Even if Clay embellished the tale, it was true in its essentials. The Louisville Courier-Journal, his hometown newspaper, reported that before his first Olympic fight, he faced challenges from journalists in the Communist-Bloc corps. "With intolerance in your country, you



**Clay came out on top in the light heavyweight competition.**

must have a lot of problems?" a "communist-country" correspondent asked Clay. Talking like Rafer Johnson, he answered, "Oh yes, we got some problems. But get this straight – it's the best country in the world."

Cassius had no problem telling Communist reporters that America was the best country in the world even if the Soviets tabled more medals than the United States. Although his responses to foreign reporters were based more on instincts than his understanding of global politics, Clay's comments were published in dozens of American newspapers, proof that he was a proud American, a patriotic "good Negro" who neither criticized his country nor challenged the social order.

Cassius Clay possessed an unshakeable confidence. He had no doubt that he would return to Louisville wearing the gold medal around his neck. Although most experts did not consider the American boxing team particularly formidable, Cassius looked impressive in the American trials. Yet Sports Illustrated predicted, "he will have more trouble against the Europeans, some of who have had as many as 200 fights."

In his first match, Clay finished Belgian Yvon Becaus in the second round. Next he took on the highly-regarded Russian Gennady Shatkov. A seasoned veteran of the Soviet "amateur" system, Shatkov had a perfect scouting report on Clay. He learned that the American fighter was "tall, magnificently built, moves lightly and has an excellent sense of distance." But knowing an opponent's strengths is not the same as being able to overcome those assets.

Cassius had other resources. He approached the match like an American Cold Warrior. "If I lose, our country will be lost," he convinced himself. "Everybody at home will be blown up. I gotta give it everything I got and bomb him out and win the war for the United States." Armed with righteous patriotism and the speed and reflexes of a deer, Clay boxed expertly, hitting Shatkov repeatedly. By the third round the Russian was dazed and virtually defenseless. Unable to penetrate Clay's defense or block his jabs and lead rights, Shatkov absorbed punishment and waited for the final bell. "I lost like a middleweight to an excellent light heavyweight," he later said. "I shook Clay's hand. It was no disgrace to lose to a boxer like that."

Now only two matches stood between Cassius and a gold medal. In the semi-final round he defeated 30-year-old Australian Tony Madigan. The Australian tried to turn the fight into a barroom brawl, hitting Cassius low and working to muscle him into corners. But by the third round he was frustrated, exhausted and an easy mark for the better boxer. "I felt like I had him," Cassius admitted. "He was swinging but I was hitting." The victory moved him into the finals against Polish champ Zbigniew Pietrzykowski.

Under the dome of the Palazzo dello Sport, with the artificial shafts of light raining on the ring like a marvelous shower of sunrays, the boxing finalists battled for Olympic gold medals. David Maraniss wrote that the illumination falling from the apex of the arena looked like "a probing beam from a flying saucer about to land." The Palazzo was packed mostly with Italians, crammed in some places two-to-a-seat and standing in the aisles. Pete Newell, the U.S. basketball coach who attended the boxing finals, also suspected that large contingents of Italian Communists were present. But regardless of political affiliation, the Italians had come to cheer for their six countrymen, led by Giovanni Benvenuti, who had made it to the finals.

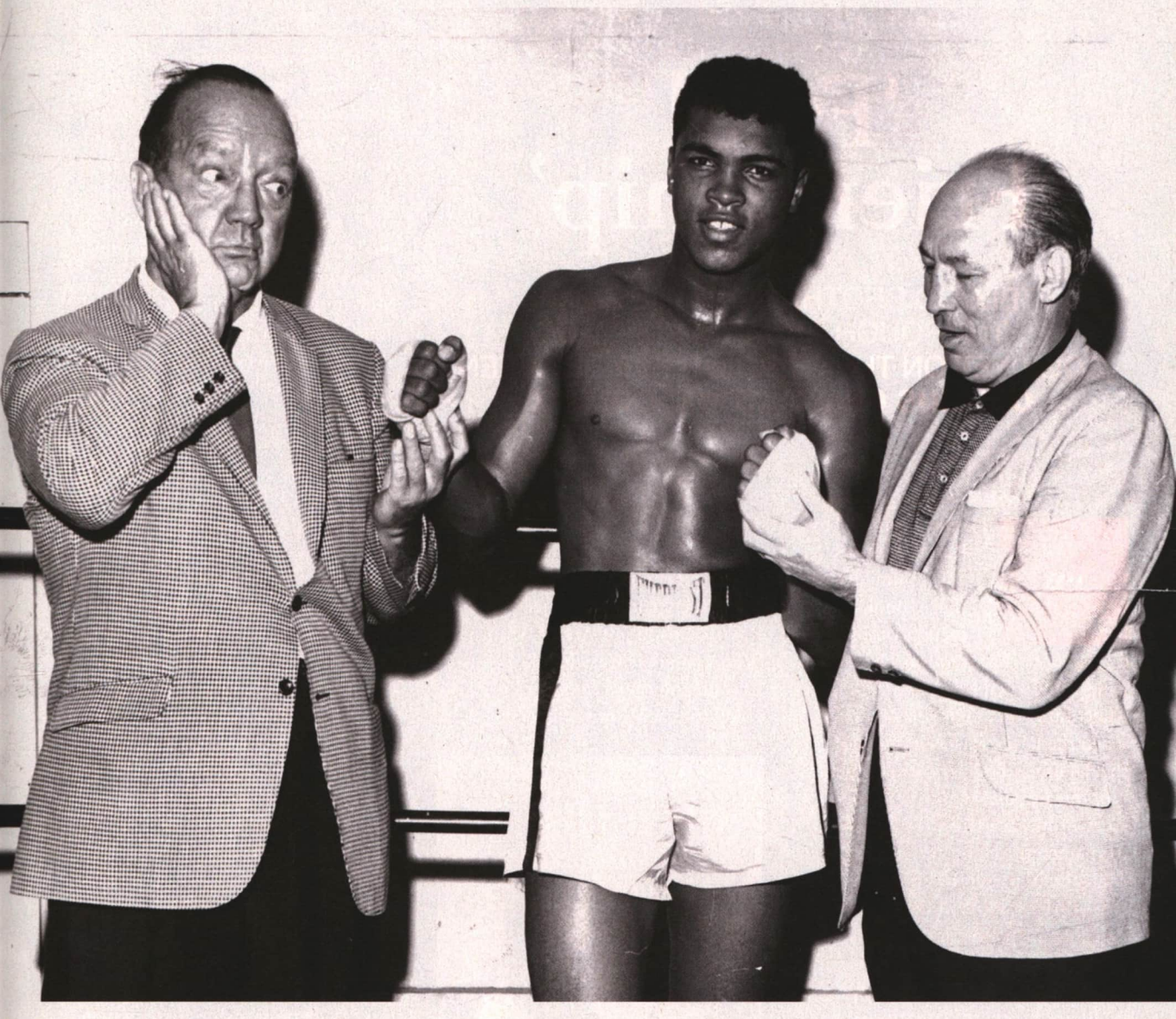
The passion and partisanship combined with the heat and crowded arena created a volatile atmosphere. When American Wilbert McClure soundly defeated Italian Carmelo Bossi, the mood of the spectators turned sullen and, predictably, anti-American. Then after American Eddie Crook eked out a close decision against Poland's Tadeusz Walasek the crowd became even uglier. Standing, stomping, booing, whistling, throwing programs – spectators registered their displeasure. They continued their protest through the gold medal ceremony and the playing of the "Star-Spangled Banner." Refusing to be lost in the din, a small group of patriotic American spectators, led by popular singer Bing Crosby, "belted out" their national anthem. Crosby, wrote reporter Shirley Povich, "unloaded with a fierce Ethel Merman bust-down-the-roof vigor that could get him thrown out of the crooner's union." Newell feared the demonstration might turn into a riot.

It was at this stage, overripe with sweat and emotions, that Cassius Clay emerged from the dressing room to battle Pietrzykowski. Nat Fleischer, editor of THE RING, claimed to have watched every match during the Rome Olympics, asserting that the competition was marked by abysmal officiating and horrible decisions, almost always favoring Soviet and Communist-Bloc boxers. Before the contest, Fleischer told Clay that "if the fight went two rounds, he had to go all out to win." But Cassius hardly needed the advice. "When they booed 5 minutes after Crook's win and I was the next American in the ring, I knew I had to leave no doubts," he said. With the crowd still hot from the Crook verdict, he could not depend on the kindness of friendly judges.

It all came down to the third round. Cassius might have won the first round and undoubtedly won the second with a late flurry of activity, but on the whole, competent defensive work and harmless jabbing marked the contest. In the third, however, Clay came out more aggressively, closing the distance between himself and the Pole and throwing more combinations. For half a round Pietrzykowski fought back but then Cassius pounded him



RING MAGAZINE



**Clay quickly became part of the boxing community – here he poses with Maxie Rosenbloom (left) and Solly Krieger – after he won his gold medal.**

to the ropes with three rapid rights.

The effect was obvious. Bleeding from his nose and mouth as well as a cut above his eye, Pietrzykowski's mouth dropped open, like a lizard gasping for air. His face smeared with blood, his legs drained of energy, he struggled to survive the round. He seemed to be battling two opponents as Clay moved from one side to the other and landed punches from all angles. Pietrzykowski was game but outclassed. Fleischer judged Clay's last round offensive was "the outstanding hitting of the tournament."

This time there were no catcalls or booing when the referee raised the American's glove in victory. Smiling, Cassius shook hands with his gracious opponent and waved toward the Pole's corner. He knew that a phase in his life had ended. "That was my last amateur fight," he told CBS commentator Bud Palmer. "I'm turning pro." Then he added, "But I don't know exactly how. I want a good contract."

When Cassius returned to Louisville, he wore the gold medal everywhere he went, reminding everyone within an earshot that he was an Olympic champion and that the best was yet to come. Someday he would be the greatest. "When I'm champ," he told one writer, "I'm really gonna enjoy myself. I'm gonna meet everybody, talk to everybody and see everything." Everyone in the whole world would know Cassius Clay. Smiling, he shadowboxed with a furious left-right-left combination. "Man," he said with a boyish grin, "it's gonna be great to be great." RING

*Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith are the co-authors of "Blood Brothers: The Fatal Friendship Between Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X." See our review of the book on Page 78.*

By Thomas Hauser

# 'Fatal Friendship'

## 'BLOOD BROTHERS' IS THE MOST THOROUGH AND COMPELLING BOOK YET ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN **CASSIUS CLAY** AND **MALCOLM X**

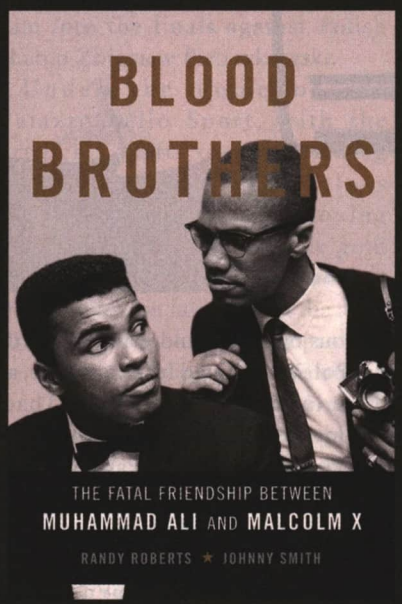
"Blood Brothers" by Randy Roberts and Johnny Smith (Basic Books) focuses on the 32 months between June 1962 when Cassius Clay and Malcolm X met and Feb. 21, 1965, when the latter was assassinated at the Audobon Ballroom in Harlem.

In the authors' words, it's "the story of how Cassius Clay became Muhammad Ali and the central role Malcolm X played in his life. It is a tale of friendship and brotherhood, love and deep affection. It is also a story of deceit, betrayal, and violence during a troubled time."

"Blood Brothers" contains some interesting insights into Clay's early home life, most notably the recounting of an incident when Cassius Clay Sr. stabbed his 15-year-old son in the thigh after Cassius Jr. sought to protect his mother against an alcohol-fueled assault. That's followed by a recounting of Clay's early ring career that offers no new insights, although there's an interesting quote from Angelo Dundee.

Dundee, who trained Clay from his second pro fight on, believed that every fighter has his own unique style.

"There's not two alike," Dundee said. "You don't say, 'This guy fights like this guy.' They don't. They're all individuals. They all got their own idiosyncrasies, got their own rhythm." Thus, Dundee told Clay, "You are neither Sugar Ray Robinson nor Archie Moore. Who you are is Cassius Marcellus Clay Jr. and that's the man I'm going to teach you to fight like. A guy is never going to get anywhere thinking he's somebody else."




"Blood Brothers" gathers steam when Malcolm X and 20-year-old Cassius Clay meet.

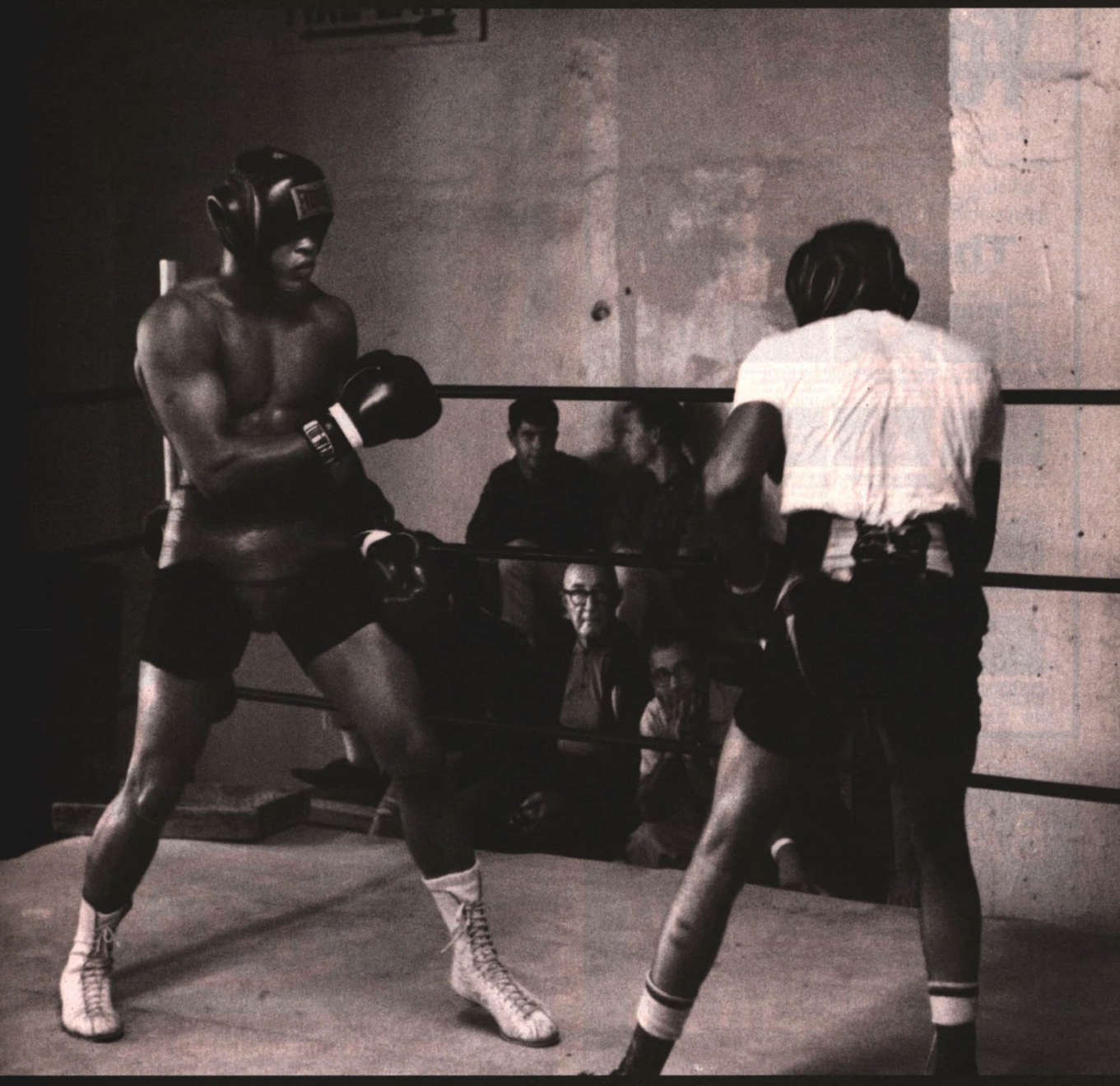
"For about two years," the authors recount, "Malcolm X counseled and spiritually guided the young boxer, instructing him on the evil ways of the world but also, more importantly, convincing him to love himself and his people. They were like blood brothers and briefly it must have seemed as if the world was theirs. In the year and a half before Cassius won the heavyweight crown, Malcolm consciously molded him into Muhammad Ali. But after Cassius defeated Sonny Liston for the title, at the instant when his political value to Malcolm was the highest, the preacher lost his convert."

"Blood Brothers" comes alive and crackles with tension once Malcolm X falls out of favor with Elijah Muhammad, who had founded and, at that time, still led the Nation of Islam. From that point on, the story is gripping and told with particular drama.

Malcolm X was now dependent on Clay as a way of maintaining his influence within the Nation of Islam.

"When Malcolm's life was in danger," Roberts and Smith write, "when Elijah Muhammad threatened to cast him outside the Nation of Islam, Clay became the central figure in his world. As long as they were together, Malcolm figured, he was safe. Cassius was the perfect shield. However, only ten days after they celebrated the boxer's championship victory over Sonny Liston, Cassius stopped taking Malcolm's phone calls. Malcolm's mistake was that he believed Cassius would see the world through his eyes and perhaps their brotherhood would become stronger than Clay's allegiance to Elijah."

"Cassius," the authors continue, "knew that the internecine fighting between Elijah and Malcolm had escalated to a critical violent stage. He had heard stories about Muslims who crossed Muhammad and paid severely for it. Now he had a choice to make. Ultimately, he submitted to Elijah. Cassius Clay had said, 'I don't have to be what you want me to be. I'm free to be what I want



**Cassius Clay (later Muhammad Ali) is pictured training at around the time he met Malcom X.**

to be.' Yet that was never really true. There were limits to his new freedom. Submitting to Elijah, the champ accepted a new name and the Supreme Minister's edict that all Muslims cease contact with Malcolm. When Malcolm lost the contest for Clay's loyalty, he had no more moves. At that moment, his life was in jeopardy."

A particularly dramatic accounting of events culminating in Malcolm's assassination follows. Meanwhile, according to multiple sources cited by Roberts and Smith, the newly-named Muhammad Ali came to fear that, if he stepped out of line, he might meet the same fate as Malcolm X.

"Blood Brothers" is the most thorough and compelling book yet on the relationship between Cassius Clay and Malcolm X. "That it ended violently and tragically," Roberts and Smith conclude, "does not diminish what they once had. Elijah Muhammad anointed Cassius as Muhammad Ali. [But] without Malcolm X, he never would have become Muhammad Ali." RING

Thomas Hauser can be reached by email at thauser@rcn.com. His most recent book, "A Hurting Sport: An Inside Look at Another Year in Boxing," was published by the University of Arkansas Press.

# YouTube

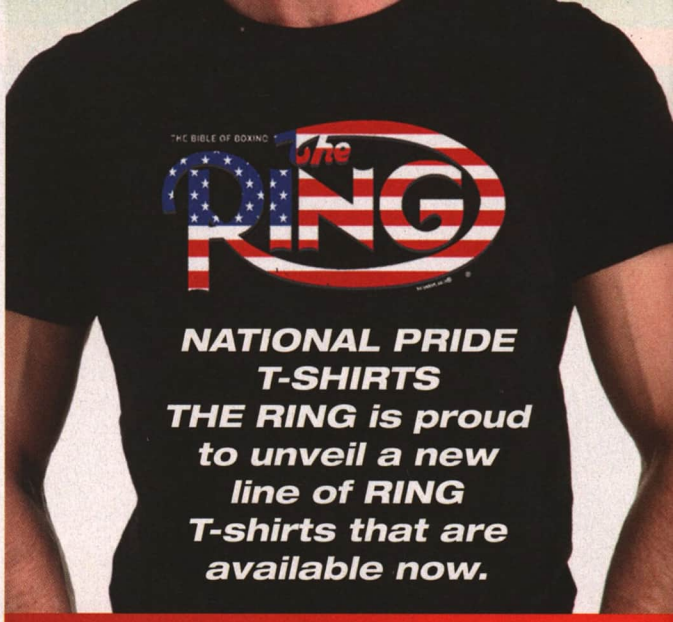
Visit THE RING's new YouTube channel ...

## TheRingDigital

# BACK ISSUES BUILD YOUR COLLECTION

# ORDER TODAY!

Ringtv.com • ringbackissues@sepublications.com • (215) 643-3087




## NATIONAL PRIDE T-SHIRTS

**THE RING is proud to unveil a new line of RING T-shirts that are available now.**

**Newly designed, one-of-a kind.**

**The shirts incorporate the iconic RING logo with the flags of four countries with proud boxing traditions – the U.S., U.K., Mexico and Puerto Rico.**

**High quality; 100 percent cotton.**

***Only $25***

(including shipping and handling).

**Easy to buy.** Just go to http://bit.ly/theringshop or scan the QR code below.

Carl Frampton enjoys the moment after his victory over Scott Quigg.

# Spoils to Frampton

## THE IRISHMAN PLOTS A LUCRATIVE FUTURE AS QUIGG REBUILDS

After all the talk and all the hype, it was Carl Frampton who enjoyed the spoils and the bragging rights with his triumph over Scott Quigg. The battle of the junior featherweights – which captured public imagination on this side of The Pond and was elevated to a pay-per-view event – was finally decided after years of debate and pontificating.

Quigg was defending the WBA title against the Northern Irishman, who held the IBF belt, but Quigg had told me in the build-up to the fight that it was not about claiming a belt. It was "for the championship of each other," bragging rights between two unbeaten pocket battleships.

Boxing historians have used "championship of each other" to describe Muhammad Ali's trilogy with Joe Frazier and Mike Tyson's struggles with Evander Holyfield. It was all on the line and Frampton's boxing won out on the night. They had promised a thriller but Frampton had a neat game plan, admitting afterward that he actually knew deep inside that it might be "a boring fight." Quigg was out-thought and outboxed by "The Jackal," who said he felt "comfortable" as he won the first half of the fight with his jab and occasional attacks. With seven rounds gone, Frampton made his opponent dance to his tune; Quigg was simply too inactive.

"Maybe I left it a bit late," admitted Quigg, who threw his power shots at his shorter, more powerfully-built foe only from Round 9 onward. By then, he needed a knockout to take the unification battle.

Although both men agreed that a rematch was possible in the afterglow of the fight, when they were interviewed in the Manchester Arena ring as a wall of noise reverberated around the venue, Frampton and his team, manager Barry McGuigan and his son, promoter Blain McGuigan, changed tack. They decided to seek a fight with Mexican Leo Santa Cruz, who had defended the WBA featherweight championship on the same night in the United States.

Frampton had aired a degree of reluctance for a Quigg rematch but explained: "If I have to have a rematch and the public demands it, no problem. But I'd rather move on to bigger and better things. The world's our oyster."

Added the elder McGuigan: "We need to step it up another level now. Leo Santa Cruz is the obvious fight. Unlike Scott Quigg, Santa Cruz lets go, he's not afraid to commit. He's a volume puncher, walks you down, and that would be a fabulous money fight. It would be great if we could get him over here. Belfast would be wonderful. And maybe we could do the rematch at Madison Square Garden. What we want now for Carl is box-office fights, exciting fights that the fans want to see."

In the opposing dressing room, Quigg was consoled by England football captain Wayne Rooney after losing by a split decision – 115-113

for Quigg, two scores of 116-112 for Frampton – although how judge Levi Martinez awarded the bout to Quigg beggared belief. Quigg also revealed that he had broken his jaw in the fourth round. Forty-eight hours later, he had a metal plate inserted in his jaw.

"I'm killing inside, absolutely devastated. But I'll come back and I'll be better for it," the 27-year-old defeated fighter said.

It's worth noting that there have been only two previous fights between Britons who both held versions of a world title: David Haye and Enzo Maccarinelli at cruiserweight in 2008 and Chris Eubank against Nigel Benn at super middleweight in 1993. It was Eubank's eighth defense of the WBO crown and Benn's fourth defense of the WBC title. Benn had lost his first encounter with Eubank in 1990. The grudge fight ended as a draw 115-113, 114-114, 113-115. When Haye and Maccarinelli met, in London, Haye was the WBA and WBC cruiserweight champion while Welshman Maccarinelli was making his fifth defense of the WBO title. Haye won in the second round.

There are two more such contests waiting to happen in 2016: at bantamweight, between Jamie McDonnell (albeit WBA "regular") and Lee Haskins (IBF), and at lightweight, with Terry Flanagan (WBO) and Anthony Crolla (WBA), both champions.

## TERRY FLANAGAN AND ANTHONY CROLLA

**Terry Flanagan's desire to** meet Anthony Crolla, a former schoolmate, came into focus after he had made a second defense of the WBO title against the brave, obdurate Liverpudlian Derry Mathews, who stepped into the ring for his 50th professional contest.

It was a convincing win on the cards for the champion, his accuracy and work-rate never relenting, but the Mancunian was unable to break the iron-clad will of the popular local fighter, on home soil for his pugilistic half-century.

Still undefeated after 30 contests, Flanagan earned a unanimous points decision on the judges' cards – 117-110, 117-110, 115-112 – enhancing his credentials once more against a very willing foil in Mathews, who gave everything as a raucous crowd tried to will him to fulfill his dream of winning his first world title after a long, successful career.

Flanagan expressed his "huge disappointment" after the fight that a world lightweight unification contest with Crolla, who holds the WBA crown and will defend it against mandatory challenger Ismael Barroso on May 7, could not be signed. But Flanagan insisted Crolla will have to face him at some point in the future as he was going "to clean out the entire division."

"I think Anthony, who is a gentleman, is avoiding me but I think the fight will happen at some point. My intention has always been to unify the division and show that I'm the outright No. 1 in the world at 135 pounds," Flanagan said. "It's just a pity that a fight between two former school friends, me and Anthony, which would have been a massive fight for both us, is not going ahead."

The two men grew up in Ancoats, a district of Manchester, with Crolla a devoted supporter of Manchester United and Flanagan a follower of Manchester City. It would have created waves in Manchester if they had squared off in a world title contest for bragging rights in the city. The inability to make the fight is a major loss for the fans but boxing is riddled with these moments as rival promoters – in this case Frank Warren and Eddie Hearn of Matchroom Sport – are unable to form the union to make it happen.

Warren, who had offered Crolla £500,000 (around $700,000) to face his fighter Flanagan, went further. "It just doesn't make sense," he said.

Guillermo Rigondeaux's tribulations never seem to end.

"It would be a fantastic promotion and it makes no sense that Crolla would not take the fight. Even if Crolla vacated the WBA belt and faced Terry, it would still be huge. The belt really doesn't matter in this case. At a time when interest in British boxers is peaking with 11 world champions, this was the time to capitalize for both fighters in a life-changing contest for them both in the ring and financially."

An emotional Mathews, meanwhile, who gave his all against Flanagan, said he would consider his future after this defeat.

## ZOLANI TETE

**The freakishly tall – 5 feet,** 9 inches – former IBF junior bantamweight titleholder Zolani Tete made a splash on the Flanagan-Mathews card by moving up to 118 pounds and stopping Mexico's Jose Santos Gonzalez in seven rounds.

The South African, who is promoted by Warren, is developing a growing fan base in the U.K. After winning the IBF 115-pound title here against Paul Butler, Tete famously spent the money paying for his mother to have a prosthetic leg fitted so she would no longer need a wheelchair.

Tete explained to me after the bout that there is such a shortage of boxing equipment in his gym, a queue forms to use the bag. I've suggested to Tete that we set up a foundation with any boxing clubs that have old equipment they don't use and send it to his township.

"Boxing is a sport which changes people's lives and there are many young men in my township who come to gym knowing that it can bring them hope," Tete told me. "That is my aim by being a world champion, to inspire people, to change despair into hope."

## GUILLERMO RIGONDEAUX

**The greatest disappointment** in recent times here in the U.K. was the failure of Guillermo Rigondeaux to complete his visa application to fight Jazza Dickens in Liverpool. There was huge interest in the Cuban coming to fight over here but he had failed to fill out the necessary forms while at training camp in Russia. Only Rigondeaux, who spoke to boxing scribes here on the phone in the build-up to the fight, really knows what went down. But it was a complete let-down for fans and Dickens, a fascinating junior featherweight and person, who, with no money to speak of as a teenager, fashioned himself a makeshift ring out of plastic bags above a derelict store as he pursued his dream. Dickens was really "up" for the contest with "Rigo," whose reputation after this debacle took a hammering.

## NICOLA ADAMS

**Nicola Adams made history** at the 2012 London Games by becoming the first woman ever to claim an Olympic gold medal in boxing. She has been driving herself for four years in an attempt to make history again by becoming the first British fighter ever to successfully defend her title at the Games in Rio this August.

"I've kept myself motivated with the goals I have. I want to become a double Olympic champion. We've never had one before, male or female. I'd love to be able to achieve that," Adams told me recently. "The Olympic title is every athlete's dream. Every athlete wants to go to the Olympics and win a gold medal. All the other titles matter as well but the Olympic one is the most special.

"I went from doing a sport where women weren't even allowed to box, to women then being allowed to box, to women then being allowed to compete internationally and compete in the Olympics. I'm definitely an advocate for following your dream."

Cheers. RING

### TOP 10

1. AMIR KHAN
2. TYSON FURY
3. KELL BROOK
4. LEE SELBY
5. CARL FRAMPTON
6. JAMES DEGALE
7. JAMIE MCDONNELL
8. SCOTT QUIGG
9. BILLY JOE SAUNDERS
10. CALLUM SMITH

**11-15:** Liam Smith, Tony Bellew, Terry Flanagan, Chris Eubank Jr., Anthony Crolla

Through fights of March 13, 2016

---

Gareth A Davies is boxing correspondent for The Telegraph, London.

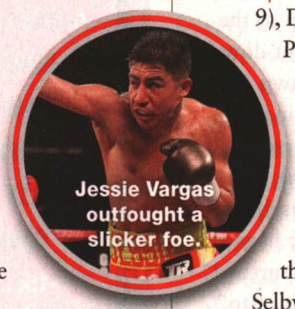
# EXCERPTS FROM THE RINGTV.COM EDITOR'S POPULAR COLUMN

**Since 2001, RingTV.com Editor Doug Fischer has held an ongoing dialog – which occasionally becomes heated debate – with boxing fans from around the world in "Dougie's Mailbag."**

**The following excerpts are from the March 7, 11 and 14 editions of the Monday and Friday mailbags.**

**DAVID, from Nashville, was impressed with Jessie Vargas' WBO welterweight title-winning TKO of previously unbeaten contender Sadam Ali. He thought the referee, Kenny Chevalier, almost ruined the fight by the way he handled Rounds 8 and 9 but realizes that Vargas would not be denied that night. "Ali was technically the better fighter but sometimes the will can overcome the skill," he said.**

**DOUGIE'S reply:** Absolutely. There seems to be steadfast belief among the "purist" modern boxing fans that the more technically sound or slicker boxer ALWAYS beats an aggressive/come-forward fighter (probably bolstered in part by the Mayweather era and the late-career success of Bernard Hopkins). But that simply isn't true. We saw three examples of "Will Beats Skill" on the same Saturday: Vargas over Ali, Oscar Escandon over Robinson Castellanos and Avtandil Khurtsidze over Antoine Douglas. Pressure busts pipes, homie.


Jessie Vargas outfought a slicker foe.

I wasn't as outraged by Chevalier's actions after the first knockdown near the end of Round 8 as many fans were. I kept my head and Vargas should have kept his. He was too keyed-up during the ref's admittedly slow count. He should have dashed to a neutral corner as soon as Ali crashed to the canvas. I didn't think Chevalier was THAT bad. He made some mistakes from the first knockdown until he finally waved the bout off but I've seen a lot worse. I think HBO and fans blew it out of proportion.

**PRESTON, from Minneapolis, asked Fischer about the recent announcement of Showtime's boxing schedule and is curious about which bouts he's looking forward to and who he favors in each matchup. He also presented four Mythical Matchups for Fischer:**

- **Manny Pacquiao vs. Edwin Valero at 135**
- **Ricky Hatton vs. Ruslan Provodnikov at 140**
- **Canelo Alvarez vs. Felix Trinidad at 154**
- **Canelo vs. Oscar De La Hoya at 154**

**DOUGIE'S reply:** Showtime presented a pretty sweet spring and summer lineup. Kudos to the network. It's nice to have Showtime back in the business of making major boxing matches. My favorites (in order of their scheduled appearances) are: Charles Martin-Anthony Joshua (April 9), Deontay Wilder-Alexander Povetkin (tentatively May 21), Keith Thurman-Shawn Porter (even though it's on CBS – June 25) and Leo Santa Cruz-Carl Frampton (late summer). There are some good co-features in that mix, including the Lee Selby-Eric Hunter and Abner Mares-Jesus Cuellar featherweight matches. Early predictions: Joshua grabs the IBF heavyweight strap with a late TKO, Povetkin annexes the WBC title via close (perhaps controversial) decision, Thurman edges Porter on points in a disappointing fight (in terms of sustained action) and Santa Cruz outpoints a very game Frampton by a split decision.

Pacquiao vs. Valero at 135 – Valero by mid-to-late stoppage in a sensational fight that features numerous knockdowns and wobbly moments from both dynamic southpaw boxer-punchers.

Hatton vs. Provodnikov at 140 – Hatton by close but unanimous decision in a brutal, bloody battle that leaves the faces of both junior welter pressure-fighters looking like raw hamburger.

Canelo vs. Trinidad at 154 – Tito by late TKO in a competitive fight.

Canelo vs. De La Hoya at 154 – The 2001-2002 junior middleweight version of De La Hoya by decision; Canelo by decision over the 2003-2007 junior middleweight version of The Golden Boy.

**ADAM, from Bogota, Colombia, asked Fischer to list his Top-5 Colombian boxers of all time.**

**DOUGIE'S reply:**

1. Antonio Cervantes – Two-time WBA junior welterweight champ during the 1970s who was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1998
2. Rodrigo Valdez – WBC/WBA middleweight champ during the 1970s
3. Miguel "Happy" Lora – WBC bantamweight titleholder during the 1980s
4. Fidel Bassa – WBA flyweight titleholder during the late 1980s
5. Jorge Eliecer Julio – WBA and WBO bantamweight beltholder during the 1990s

**PETE NIGHTINGALE, from Northampton, England, asked Fischer why marvelously talented featherweight titleholder Vasyl Lomachenko isn't in THE RING's Pound for Pound rankings. He says the magazine's No. 1-rated featherweight has underrated "boxing ability, footwork, movement, lightening combinations and shot selection." He also presented Fischer four Mythical Matchups:**

- **Joe Calzaghe vs. Carl Froch at super middleweight**
- **Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs. Manny Pacquiao in 2008 (after Pacquiao beat Oscar De La Hoya)**
- **Prince Naseem Hamed vs. Guillermo Rigondeaux at featherweight**
- **Kell Brook vs. Floyd Mayweather Jr. at welterweight**

**DOUGIE'S reply:** I think Lomachenko is an elite-level boxer possessing sublime natural talent/athleticism and the all-around world-class boxing ability that you noted. I do believe that he's close to breaking into THE RING's Pound for Pound rankings but he needs a defining victory against a respected opponent. So far, a decision over Gary Russell Jr. is the best win of his six-bout pro career. If "Loma" can beat Nicholas Walters at 130 pounds (a matchup that is seriously being discussed) I guarantee that the RING Ratings Panel will bring his name up as a potential pound-for-pound player.

Your mythical matchups:

Calzaghe vs. Froch – Calzaghe by close, maybe majority decision

Mayweather vs. Pacquiao in 2008 – I think Mayweather would have had a little too much for the early welterweight version of the Pacman. If you recall, he went from 130- and 135-pound title bouts to weighing in as a tiny welterweight against a drained De La Hoya by the end of 2008. He didn't come into his own as a junior welterweight/welterweight until 2009. I'd go with Mayweather by decision in 2008. (I only favor the 2009-2010 version of Pacquiao over Floyd at 147.)

Hamed vs. Rigondeaux at featherweight – Hamed by one-punch KO by the middle rounds.

Brook vs. Mayweather – Mayweather at his best at welterweight outpoints Brook, but if they fought now, I'd favor Special K.

**MICHAEL, from New Hyde Park, New York, was surprised to learn that the first Muhammad Ali-Joe Frazier fight took place on a Monday. He asked Fischer if other big fights of past eras were scheduled on Mondays or other days of the week.**

**DOUGIE'S reply:** Boxing on a Monday (and other days during the week) was a normal occurrence for professional events – from the club-show level to big championship bouts – in previous eras. Major boxing on the weekend – Fridays and Saturdays – has only become the norm in recent decades.

Many of the first title bouts that I covered at The Forum and the Olympic Auditorium during the start of my boxing writing career almost 20 years ago took place on Mondays and Thursdays. Forum Boxing, which did shows at The Forum in Inglewood, The Pond (now the Honda Center) in Anaheim and the old Tropicana in Las Vegas, used to hold at least one Monday card every month for several years.

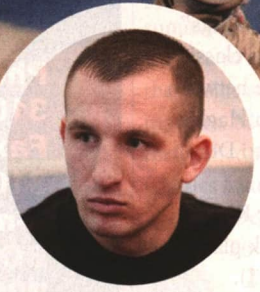
Some of the most memorable fights of my youth (and of all time) took place on Monday. I was reminded of this recently while reading the late George Kimball's "Four Kings" (an excellent book about the classic round-robin that took place between Sugar Ray Leonard, Marvin Hagler, Thomas Hearns and Roberto Duran during the 1980s).

The best scrap of the Four Kings' series – Hagler-Hearns – took place on a Monday (April 15, 1985). The biggest event of the series – Hagler-Leonard – took place on a Monday (April 6, 1987) too. The most underrated fight of the series – Leonard-Hearns II – also took place on a Monday (June 12, 1989).

In case you're wondering, Duran-Leonard II took place on a Tuesday (Nov. 25, 1980), Leonard-Hearns I took place on a Wednesday (Sept. 16, 1981), Hagler-Duran took place on a Thursday (Nov. 10, 1983) and the awful Leonard-Duran rubber match also took place on a Thursday (Dec. 7, 1989).

Leonard-Duran I and Hearns-Duran took place on Fridays.

Egidijus Kavaliauskas is a skillful boxer with great power, a dangerous combination.



# EGIDIJUS KAVALIAUSKAS

## THE LITHUANIAN WELTERWEIGHT – CALLED **'MEAN MACHINE'** – HAS DRAWN COMPARISONS TO GENNADY GOLOVKIN

Egidijus Kavaliauskas isn't a name that easily rolls off the tongue. He needed a nickname. So trainers at the Robert Garcia Boxing Academy in Oxnard, California, where he trains, christened the two-time Olympian "Mean Machine," which seems perfect for a fighter who has stopped 11 of his 12 opponents.

The 27-year-old welterweight has been destroying increasingly competent foes as he has progressed, including Prenice Brewer recently. And he's no mere slugger. He has the skills – pinpoint accuracy, ability to cut off the ring, easily switching from offense to defense – that have earned him comparisons to another

disciplined destroyer, Gennady Golovkin.

"I don't want to compare him to Golovkin because it's unfair," said Carl Moretti, vice president at Top Rank, which promotes Kavaliauskas. "But they're (both) precise, they don't waste punches, they're cool about it ... and they can hit with both hands."

Kavaliauskas, who is managed by Egis Klimas and trained by Robert Garcia, also seems to have Golovkin's charm and humility. He is friendly, funny and appreciative of the opportunities that await him. He also has a strong command of English, which is a plus. That, combined with his fan-friendly fighting style, could lead to commercial success.

The native of Kaunas, a good-sized city in south-central Lithuania, grew up a world away from American boxing but looked up to Mike Tyson and Arturo Gatti. "Wow, for me, (Tyson) was everything. He was my idol," Kavaliauskas said. "And then it was Arturo Gatti. He was a warrior. Arturo Gatti in a world title fight ... I could watch him fight every day. May he rest in peace."

To say that Kavaliauskas is dreaming of the day he fights for a world title like his idols is an understatement. And he has possible foils on his radar. He lists titleholders Keith Thurman, Kell Brook and Danny Garcia among those he would like to face one day soon. When they have a bout scheduled, Kavaliauskas is glued in front of the television – scouting, in effect.

"All the time when I watch the fights I'm just thinking what I would do in the ring with them," he said. "How I will move, how I will punch, what I will do. So for every fight I'm figuring out my strategy against them."

Top Rank would match him against anyone in the division now. But who would accept a fight against him?

"There really isn't anybody who we wouldn't fight," Moretti said. "It's just a matter of 'would the name contenders fight a guy that isn't a big name and is just 12-0? What benefit is it to them?' But he could handle Top 10 guys right now with no problem."

When he spoke to THE RING, Kavaliauskas had a less ambitious goal: to say hello to another one of his idols, Manny Pacquiao. His best chance would've been on April 9, when he was scheduled to face undefeated German Deniz Ilbay on the undercard of Pacquiao-Tim Bradley in Las Vegas. He was also imagining the day when he would get to shake Tyson's hand.

"I hope one day I will meet him somewhere at a fight," he said. "I would just say, 'Hey Mike, you're one of the baddest men in the world.'"

From one bad man to another.

**THE ESSENTIALS**
**EGIDIJUS KAVALIAUSKAS**

**Age:** 27

**Weight class:** Welterweight

**Height:** 5 feet 9 inches

**Stance:** Orthodox

**Hometown:** Kaunas, Lithuania

**Record:** 12-0 (11 KOs)

**Biggest strengths:** Has power in both hands and the ability to cut off the ring » Has impressive hand speed » Can box if he has to.

**Biggest question marks:** Stamina. He has never gone past five rounds » Chin hasn't been tested.

## CHRIS GALEANO
### MIDDLEWEIGHT

Galeano (10-0, 1 KO) is a slick boxer who isn't afraid of challenges. He bested then-undefeated Shawn Cameron last November in his first 10-rounder and he's scheduled to face upset specialist DeVaun Lee in the main event of another Lou DiBella-promoted show on March 30 in Manhattan.

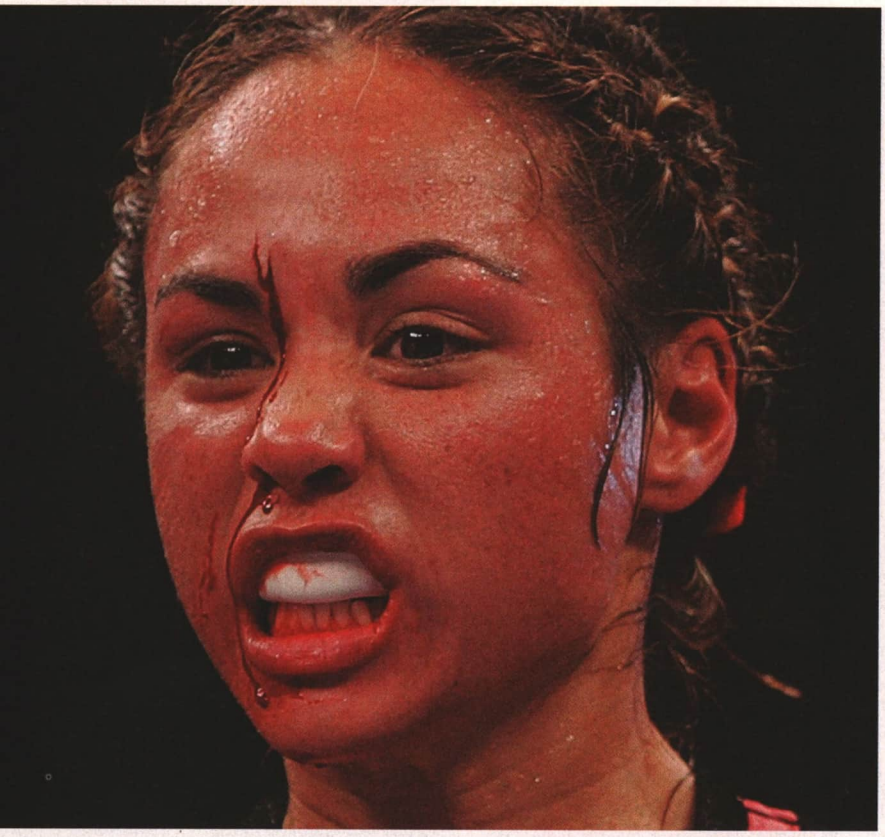
## CASSIUS CHANEY
### HEAVYWEIGHT

Chaney (6-0, 4 KOs) is a former University of New Haven basketball player and his athleticism is evident. The Main Events-promoted big man, who is 6-foot-6, has good balance and moves well for someone his size. With the division revitalized, Chaney – who was named after Cassius Clay (later Muhammad Ali) – could be a name to remember as his career progresses.

## SONNY FREDRICKSON
### JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHT

The 6-foot-2 Fredrickson (12-0, 9 KOs) has maintained a brisk pace in his career, fighting six times in 2014 and five times in 2015. The Roc Nation product is a thinker in the ring, using his jab often, but he's also aggressive. He goes to the body well and has a good left hook.

INSET: ALFREDO PLIADŽIO NUOTR.; EGIDIJUS-KAVALIAUSKAS-LAIMI-PO-NOKAUTO



2016 IWBHF inductee Elena Reid was special from the beginning.

# Call to the Hall

## THE IWBHF CLASS OF '16 CELEBRATES BOTH FIGHTERS AND PIONEERS

Lucia Rijker, Christy Martin, Laila Ali and Ann Wolfe were inducted into the International Women's Boxing Hall of Fame in its first two years of existence. The Class of 2016 isn't as star-studded but the eight women being celebrated provide a deep look into the history of the sport, making them no less deserving of this honor than the aforementioned superstars.

"This year includes seven boxers from both the modern era and the pioneer years of the sport and a trailblazing woman who breached the all-male ranks of boxing management in the 1980s," said Sue Fox, IWBHF president and founder. "I am looking forward to honoring our eight 2016 inductees this year and greatly appreciate them for their groundbreaking efforts in the sport."

Meet the IWBHF Class of 2016.

### SUMYA ANANI

**Active:** 1996-2006
**Record:** 25-3-1 (10 KOs)
**Background:** The Kansas City native could do it all in the ring. She received some unfortunate publicity early in her career, when a knockout of Katie Dallam nearly cost Dallam her life, but her victory over the seemingly unstoppable Christy Martin in 1998 established the "Island Girl" as a force in the sport. She never fought Martin again but did defeat several more big names – including Jane Couch, Britt Van Buskirk and Fredia Gibbs – and won world titles at 140 and 147 pounds over the course of a 10-year career.

### JANE COUCH

**Active:** 1994-2007
**Record:** 28-11 (9 KOs)
**Background:** Couch's record was impressive and a number of world titles were nice but she earned her place in the IWBHF by opening the door to female boxers in the U.K. She went to court to become the first British woman to be licensed to box by the British Boxing Board of Control in 1998. By then Couch had already made a name for herself on the international scene by defeating Leah Mellinger in 1997 to win the WIBF junior welterweight crown, one of many fights against the biggest names in the sport. That includes Lucia Rijker, Holly Holm and Anne Sophie Mathis.

### ELENA REID

**Active:** 2000-2010
**Record:** 19-6-6 (5 KOs)
**Background:** When your second pro bout is against Layla McCarter, that's a sign you're a special fighter. And, indeed, "Baby Doll" was special. One of the most marketable fighters of her era didn't always beat the best in the sport but she fought them on a consistent basis – including Mariana Juarez, Regina Halmich, Alicia Ashley and Susi Kentikian – and generally acquitted herself well. She nearly toppled Halmich for the flyweight title in 2004 only to leave Germany with a draw but finally struck gold by defeating Mary Ortega for the WIBA flyweight belt in 2006.

## ANN-MARIE SACCURATO

**Active:** 2002-2011
**Record:** 15-6-2 (6 KOs)
**Background:** The two-time WBC lightweight titleholder had only 23 pro fights but it seems as if she was around forever because so many of those bouts were against world-class competition, making her one of the top fighters of her era. The fearless competitor traveled the world over to ply her trade – from Canada to Japan to France to Argentina – and was always comfortable in her opponents' backyards. And she had success. The New Yorker beat Jelena Mrdjenovich twice and stopped Jessica Rakoczy.

## GISELLE SALANDY

**Active:** 2000-2008
**Record:** 16-0 (6 KOs)
**Background:** Sadly, Salandy's story is one of what might've been, as the Trinidad and Tobago native was tragically killed in an automobile accident at the age of 21 in 2009. Yet in her short life she managed to make such an impact that boxing pundits spoke of her as a future legend in the sport. Salandy was certainly on her way. She made her pro debut at the age of 13 (yes, 13) and ultimately unified six (yes, six) world junior middleweight titles when she defeated 9-0 Karolina Lukasik in 2008.

## LADY TYGER TRIMIAR

**Active:** 1976-1985
**Record:** 12-2 (4 KOs)
**Background:** Marian Trimiar, more famously known as "Lady Tyger" Trimiar, was the first woman to apply for a boxing license in New York and finally receive it – along with Cathy "Cat" Davis and Jackie Tonawanda – after a court battle in 1978. Davis and Tonawanda got the bulk of the press in those days but historians will readily declare that Trimiar was the best of the trio in the ring. The Bronx product did get her share of attention too, though, especially in 1987, when she staged a monthlong hunger strike to get more favorable conditions and paydays for female boxers.

## BRITT VAN BUSKIRK

**Active:** 1979-2003
**Record:** 9-17-2 (5 KOs)
**Background:** Disregard the record of Britt Van Buskirk, as it really doesn't apply in terms of her impact on women's boxing. The California native went 3-0 from 1979 to 1983, hung up her gloves and opened a gym, where she trained fighters and promoted amateur bouts. But she came out of retirement at the age of 35 in 1996. She would lose more than she won but there is no shame in falling to such stars as Lucia Rijker, Chevelle Hallback and Sumya Anani. Van Buskirk beat Anani in the first of their three bouts in 2000.

## JACKIE KALLEN

**Active:** 1978-present
**Background:** Kallen first garnered the attention of the boxing world as the publicist for the Kronk boxing team when Thomas Hearns, Hilmer Kenty and Co. were riding high. But it was as a boxing manager that the Detroit native truly made her mark as she broke barriers in the boys' club of pro boxing. She is best known for leading James Toney to a world championship, a relationship that was later the subject of the feature film "Against the Ropes," which starred Meg Ryan as Kallen.

---

**Notes:** RING pound-for-pound queen Cecilia Braekhus made her long awaited return to the ring on Feb. 27 in Germany, shutting out Chris Namus over 10 rounds to retain her IBF, WBA, WBC, IBO and WBO titles. The 34-year-old from Norway, who had been sidelined by injury since November of 2014, improved to 28-0 (7 knockouts). … Former three-division champion and pound-for-pound queen Holly Holm lost her UFC women's bantamweight title on March 5, submitting in the fifth round against Miesha Tate.

**1. CECILIA BRAEKHUS**
**Norway • 28-0 (7 KOs)**
Welterweight

**2. DELFINE PERSOON**
**Belgium • 35-1 (16 KOs)**
Lightweight

**3. JACKIE NAVA**
**Mexico • 32-4-3 (14 KOs)**
Junior featherweight

**4. JELENA MRDJENOVICH**
**Canada • 36-10-1 (19 KOS)**
Featherweight

**5. JESSICA CHAVEZ**
**Mexico • 26-4-3 (4 KOs)**
Flyweight

**6. LAYLA MCCARTER**
**U.S. • 36-13-5 (8 KOs)**
Lightweight

**7. ERICA ANABELLA FARIAS**
**Argentina • 22-1 (10 KOs)**
Junior welterweight

**8. IBETH ZAMORA SILVA**
**Mexico • 24-5 (9 KOs)**
Junior flyweight

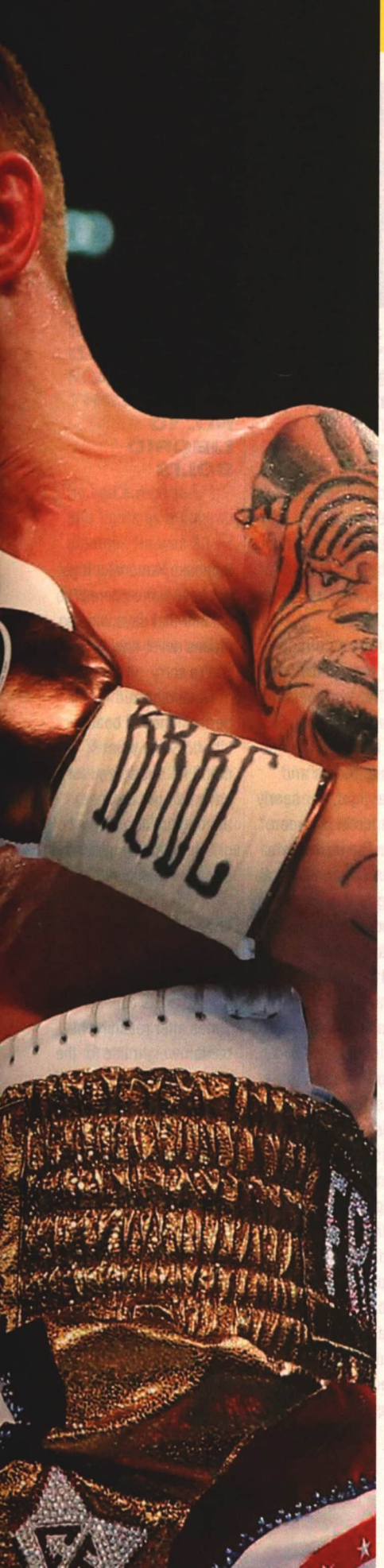
**9. ALICIA ASHLEY**
**U.S. • 23-10-1 (4 KOS)**
Junior featherweight

**10. EDITH SOLEDAD MATTHYSSE**
**Argentina • 14-8-1 (1 KO)**
Featherweight

Through fights of March 13, 2016

**Coming up: April 16 – Kali Reis vs Maricela Cornejo, middleweights (for the vacant WBC title), Auckland, New Zealand**

Carl Frampton (right) did most of the work early and then held on to beat Scott Quigg on Feb. 27.



# RINGSIDE REPORTS

BY NORM FRAUENHEIM

## CARL FRAMPTON SD 12 SCOTT QUIGG

**Date:** Feb. 27
**Site:** Manchester Arena, U.K.
**Division:** Junior featherweight
**Weights:** Frampton 121.7 pounds, Quigg 121.6
**RING ratings (before fight):** Frampton No. 3, Quigg No. 2
**Network:** Showtime, Sky Sports

**Carl Frampton is surrounded** by history. Always has been. Paramilitary murals and sectarian graffiti were there when he was a kid playing in the streets of Tiger's Bay, a Belfast neighborhood constructed for the laborers who built the Titanic.

In northeast Ireland, history isn't a piece of antiquity hidden in a museum or buried in a textbook. It's up close and personal, a constant reminder that another chapter could unfold at any moment.

Turns out, Frampton just might be that chapter.

Barry McGuigan thinks so and he's the face of a story as compelling as any in Northern Ireland's turbulent past. The former featherweight champion was a symbol of unity during a period in Belfast history known as The Troubles.

In virtually every ranking of Ireland's greatest boxers, McGuigan is among the Top 5. These days he is Frampton's mentor and manager, and he is prepared to relinquish his standing to the fighter whose split decision over Scott Quigg has given him a chance at making his own history.

"This kid is the best Irish fighter we've ever had," McGuigan told the Belfast Telegraph a few days after the split scorecards – 116-112 on two for Frampton and a head-scratching 115-113 on one for Quigg – were announced. "That's a bold statement and I'll get told off for that. But he has time to prove that and we have to give him the fights to prove it."

Proof, of course, is its own burden. Thus far, however, the durable Frampton (22-0, 14 KOs) has displayed a variety of punches and poise that allow him to confront, then conquer adversity.

From the beginning, there was never much doubt against Quigg, who in the fourth round suffered a broken jaw that required surgery. It was one-sided, so much so that even Frampton called it dull.

"It was pretty boring," Frampton said. "We thought that was the way it was going to go. I didn't really understand his tactics. He was giving me rounds. I wasn't having to do a lot."

At first glance, Quigg (31-1-2, 23 KOs) appeared to have an edge in size and power. On the same day in July 2015 that Quigg scored a second-round stoppage of Kiko Martinez, Frampton suffered two knockdowns in the first round against Alejandro Gonzalez in El Paso. Frampton had needed 12 rounds to beat Martinez in 2014. That was enough to think that Quigg would win, especially in front of hometown fans in Manchester.

In hindsight, however, Frampton's difficult victory in his first trip to the U.S. provided a clue as to how he would do against Quigg and how he might do against Leo Santa Cruz or Guillermo Rigondeaux or Japan's Shingo Wake. Frampton got up twice and went on to dominate in a ring far from his Belfast home.

He knows how to travel. Knows how to get up. Knows how to win, too.

"I felt Carl's performance was fabulous and he still had far more gears to go through," McGuigan said. "We still haven't seen the best of him.

History waits.

**WORLDWIDE RESULTS— Go to: bit.ly/worldwide-results or scan the QR code to see weekly fight results at RingTV.com.**

## FELIX STURM MD 12 NO. 8 FEDOR CHUDINOV

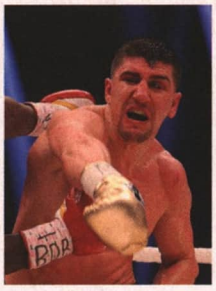
Feb. 20 Oberhausen, Germany (Box Nation)

There was controversy about the gloves and scorecards and who-knows-what-all. It was as good a time as any for Felix Sturm to say goodbye.

"Perhaps that was my last bout," he said while a debate raged about the judging – 115-113 twice for Sturm and a 114-114 draw – in a decision over Fedor Chudinov. "It was a nice way to sign off, if that was it."

If Sturm (40-5-3, 18 KOs) walks away, he'll do so as the first German with five world titles. About that, there's no argument. On how he achieved it, there's plenty.

In winning a rematch of his split-decision loss in May, it looked as if Sturm took a 168-pound title by stealing rounds in the closing seconds. Chudinov (14-1, 10 KOs), meanwhile, landed the harder blows with gloves that appeared to be shedding paint as the fight wore on, adding more ammo to the protests that followed.



## NO. 4 MARCO HUCK TKO 10 NO. 10 OLA AFOLABI

Feb. 27, Halle, Germany (RTL, Box Nation)

Three fights didn't decide much. Marco Huck fought Ola Afolabi to a draw in one, won two others by decision and hoped to settle the argument in a fourth.

Consider it settled.

Huck (39-3-1, 27 KOs) delivered the final punctuation mark in the 46th round of their series, stopping Afolabi (22-5-4, 11 KOs) for the first time in his career.

"I'm back," said Huck, whose pursuit of a record 14 straight cruiserweight title defenses fell one win short in a KO loss to Krzysztof Glowacki last August. "When I train right, no one can beat me."

Afolabi sure couldn't. He was finished – his left eye a swollen mess – after the 10th round. With a convincing win over Afolabi, Huck hit the reset button on his career and might've set up another rematch, this time against Glowacki.

## NO. 2 TERENCE CRAWFORD TKO 5 HANK LUNDY

Feb. 27, New York (HBO)

There's no stardom without a big stage, a noisy rival, a flash of emotion and a dramatic finish.

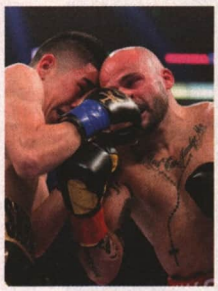
Terence Crawford checked all of those boxes in his latest step toward turning a good fighter into a major attraction.

In The Theater at New York's Madison Square Garden against trash-talking Hank Lundy, Crawford (28-0, 20 KOs) answered, punishing repeated insults with repeated punches.

By the fifth, Lundy (26-6-1, 13 KOs) had nothing more to say. He was knocked down once. He was bloodied. At 2:09 of the round, the junior welterweight contest was stopped.

"It's real satisfying because of all the talking," said Crawford, a quiet Midwesterner known more for skill than words.

Next stop? One interesting possibility: Crawford vs. Viktor Postol in a title-unification bout at The Forum in Inglewood, California.



## NO. 3 LEO SANTA CRUZ TKO 5 KIKO MARTINEZ

Feb. 27, Anaheim, Calif. (Showtime)

It's hard to find a photo of Leo Santa Cruz without a friendly smile. It's perhaps a look that defines boxing's happiest warrior.

But there's nothing friendly about how Santa Cruz conducts his business.

Kiko Martinez saw that smile before and after the fight. For nearly five rounds in between, however, he saw only a whirlwind of punches, a warning to Carl Frampton and whomever else wants to fight Santa Cruz (32-0-1, 18 KOs).

Santa Cruz's inexhaustible work rate floored Martinez (35-7, 26 KOs) twice in the first. Martinez got up and put pressure on Santa Cruz in the second but only ran into a further tide of punches. Santa Cruz threw 570 before the featherweight bout was stopped at 2:09 of the fifth.

"I was tired," Santa Cruz said in what qualified as the night's only upset.

## NO. 1 SHINSUKE YAMANAKA UD 12 NO. 10 LIBORIO SOLIS

March 4, Kyoto, Japan (Nippon TV)

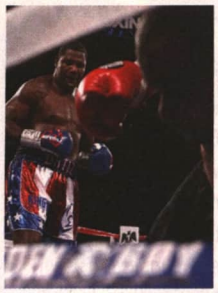
Shinsuke Yamanaka must not have remembered the old line that says winning means never having to say you're sorry.

He apologized for his performance in beating Liborio Solis. What's more, he apologized for having to get up once, then again, in a display of grit that usually generates a roar of thanks.

"I was knocked down twice and could not show my best," Yamanaka (25-0-2, 17 KOs) told The Japan Times after retaining his bantamweight title for the 10th time with a 117-107 decision on all three cards. "I'm sorry."

Sorry, no apology necessary.

After knocking down Solis (23-4-1, 10 KOs) in the second round, Yamanaka was floored twice in the third, getting up each time and using his agile footwork to regain control, so much so that he again dropped the resilient Venezuelan in the ninth. By then, only Solis looked sorry.



## NO. 5 LUIS ORTIZ KO 6 TONY THOMPSON

March 5, Washington, D.C. (HBO)

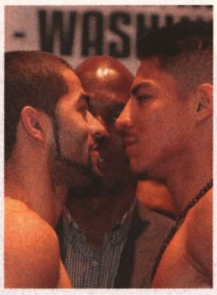
He had a reported 360 fights as a Cuban amateur. He was 30 when he turned pro six years ago. Age might be an issue. But there's no doubt about the skill. Or the intent.

Luis Ortiz looks ageless in the ring.

The 36-year-old heavyweight (25-0, 22 KOs) had a kid's smile on his middle-aged face and old-school power in his hands against Tony Thompson (40-7, 27 KOs), who looked all of his 44 years when he fell like an old building at 2:29 of the sixth round.

Thompson could have been finished earlier but Ortiz was having too much fun before the third and final knockdown.

"Bernard Hopkins is 50, so age is not an issue," said Ortiz, who figures to be the most feared heavyweight for a while.



## JESSIE VARGAS TKO 9 NO. 8 SADAM ALI

March 5, Washington, D.C. (HBO)

Don't tell Jessie Vargas that not much happens in seven seconds. For Vargas, those moments are a cause, a reason to fight.

They represent an opportunity that he says was robbed from him in a loss to Tim Bradley last June.

"Unfinished business," Vargas says in asking for a rematch of a one-sided decision he lost to Bradley when their fight was mistakenly ended with seven seconds on the clock and Bradley ahead on the cards.

Vargas (27-1, 10 KOs) got some attention for his ongoing argument with an eye-catching stoppage of Sadam Ali (22-1, 13 KOs), who had no counter for Vargas' array of precise punches. Vargas dropped and then stopped Ali at 2:09 of the ninth round to win a vacant welterweight title.

Then he said it again: "I want Bradley."

## ANTONIO MARGARITO UD 10 JORGE PAEZ JR.

March 5, Mexico City (beIN, TV Azteca)

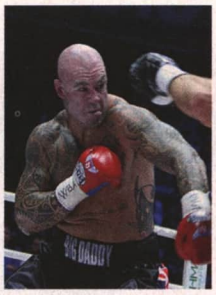
Antonio Margarito says he doesn't need money. He says he's fighting for his kids, fighting so they will know who he is. Or perhaps who he was.

"I want my kids to see me fight," Margarito told ESPN before facing Jorge Paez Jr. in his first bout in more than four years.

But will he be able to see his kids after the comeback?

It's a tough question but impossible to ignore. It's there, in the misshapen right eye in current photographs of Margarito (39-8, 27 KOs). Manny Pacquiao busted it up. Then Miguel Cotto targeted it in 2011 in what appeared to be Margarito's last fight.

But it wasn't. There were 10,000 on hand to see Margarito get up from a knockdown for a 95-94, 97-93, 96-93 decision over Paez (39-8-2, 23 KOs). He's still a draw, which is something promoters always see.



## LUCAS BROWNE TKO 10 NO. 8 RUSLAN CHAGAEV

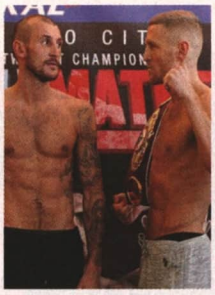
March 5, Grozny, Russia (BoxNation)

Lucas Browne, a man from Down Under, knew he was in a different time zone. He just didn't know how different.

But Browne adjusted to Chechnya's clock enough to survive, then stop Ruslan Chagaev in a fight that made history – sort of. With a right that left Chagaev helpless at 2:27 of the 10th, Browne became the first Aussie with a heavyweight title – the WBA's "regular" title, which THE RING doesn't recognize when a "super" champion is in place.

Browne had to get through a sixth round that lasted beyond the standard three minutes. Chagaev (34-3-1, 21 KOs) dropped Browne late in the round. For the final 10 seconds, Browne (24-0, 21 KOs) stayed away from a puncher reported to be friends with Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, who was at ringside. Then he had to endure an extra 15 seconds.

"Doesn't surprise me," Browne told Sydney media. "I mean, when you're fighting a guy whose best friend is the president ..."



## NO. 5 TERRY FLANAGAN UD 12 DERRY MATHEWS

March 12, Liverpool, U.K. (BoxNation)

Terry Flanagan has gone global. He has a world lightweight title. He has defended it twice. For now, however, he just wants to prove he's the best in the neighborhood.

Flanagan could settle that one and also unify the title against Anthony Crolla, a longtime friend and old classmate from Manchester.

But Crolla continued to be an elusive business partner in the immediate aftermath of Flanagan's defense of his WBO title, a 117-110, 115-112, 117-110 decision over Derry Mathews.

"I think Anthony, who is a gentleman, is avoiding me," Flanagan (30-0, 12 KOs) said after a patient and predictable victory over Mathews (38-10-2, 20 KOs).

Crolla, the WBA beltholder, has an offer for the proposed bout from promoter Frank Warren. The guess is that it'll happen at some point. Until then, the neighborhood will have to wait and watch Flanagan in other bouts.

Gennady Golovkin (left) and Dominic Wade are scheduled to meet on April 23 in Inglewood, Calif.

## APRIL

### GENNADY GOLOVKIN VS. DOMINIC WADE

**Date:** April 23
**Location:** Forum, Inglewood, Calif.
**Division:** Middleweights (for Golovkin's IBF and WBA titles)
**RING Ratings:** Golovkin No. 1
**TV:** HBO
**Watchability rating (up to five stars):** ★★★★
**Also fighting:** Roman Gonzalez (champion) vs. McWilliams Arroyo (No. 8), flyweights (for Gonzalez's RING and WBC titles).
**Significance:** This amounts to a stay-busy fight for Golovkin (34-0, 31 KOs), who expects to face Canelo Alvarez in a megafight late this year. Triple-G has stopped 21 consecutive opponents. Wade (18-0, 12 KOs) is unbeaten but is taking an enormous step up in opposition. He is coming off a split-decision victory over Sam Soliman last June.
**Prediction:** Rosenthal – Golovkin KO 5; Fischer – Golovkin KO 6; Harty – Golovkin KO 5; Abramson – Golovkin KO 4

APRIL 15 – Jesus Soto Karass vs. Yoshihiro Kamegai, junior middleweights, Los Angeles (RingTVLive.com, Estrella TV)
APRIL 15 – Nikolay Potapov vs. Stephon Young, bantamweights, Verona, N.Y. (Showtime)
APRIL 16 – Errol Spence (No. 8) vs. Chris Algieri, welterweights, Brooklyn, N.Y. (NBC). Also, Krzysztof Glowacki (No. 3) vs. Steve Cunningham, cruiserweights (for Glowacki's WBO title).
APRIL 16 – Gary Russell Jr. (No. 2) vs. Patrick Hyland, featherweights (for Russell's WBC title), Mashantucket, Conn. (Showtime). Also, Jose Pedraza (No. 7) vs. Stephen Smith, junior lightweights (for Pedraza's IBF title).
APRIL 16 – McJoe Arroyo (No. 6) vs. Jerwin Ancajas, junior bantamweights (for Arroyo's IBF title), Bacoor, Philippines.
APRIL 23 – Nonito Donaire (No. 3) vs. Zsolt Bedak, junior featherweights (for Donaire's WBO title), Cebu City, Philippines.
APRIL 23 – Carlos Cuadras (No. 2) vs. Richie Mepranum, junior bantamweights (for Cuadras' WBC title), Los Mochis, Mexico.
APRIL 27 – Takashi Uchiyama (No. 1) vs. Jezreel Corrales, junior lightweights (for Uchiyama's WBA title), Tokyo.
APRIL 30 – Badou Jack (No. 3) vs. Lucian Bute, super middleweights (for Jack's WBC title) (Showtime). Also, James DeGale (No. 2) vs. Rogelio Medina, super middleweights (for DeGale's IBF title).
APRIL 30 – Anselmo Moreno (No. 3) vs. Suriyan Sor Rungvisai (No. 7), bantamweights, Panama City, Panama.

## MAY

### CANELO ALVAREZ VS. AMIR KHAN

**Date:** May 7
**Location:** T-Mobile Arena, Las Vegas
**Division:** Middleweights (for Alvarez's RING and WBC titles; 155-pound catchweight)
**RING Ratings:** Alvarez champion; Khan No. 3 welterweight
**TV:** HBO Pay-Per-View
**Watchability rating (up to five stars):** ★★★★★
**Significance:** Alvarez (46-1-1, 32 KOs) is coming off a unanimous-decision victory over Miguel Cotto in November, which gave him his middleweight titles. He has won four straight since losing to Floyd Mayweather Jr. This is a big step up for Khan (31-3, 19 KOs) in terms of size; he has never fought about 147 pounds.
**Prediction:** Rosenthal – Alvarez KO 8; Fischer – Alvarez KO 10; Harty – Alvarez KO 7; Abramson – Alvarez KO 8

MAY 7 – Anthony Crolla (No. 6) vs. Ismael Barroso, lightweights (for Crolla's WBA title), Manchester, England (Sky).
MAY 21 – Deontay Wilder (No. 3) vs. Alexander Povetkin (No. 2), heavyweights (for Wilder's WBC title), Russia (Showtime)
MAY 21 – Denis Lebedev (No. 2) vs. Victor Ramirez (No. 9), cruiserweights, Russia.
MAY 21 – David Haye vs. TBA, heavyweights, London.

## JUNE

JUNE 4 – Francisco Vargas (No. 2) vs. Orlando Salido (No. 4), junior lightweights (for Vargas' WBC title), Carson, Calif. (HBO).
JUNE 11 – Ruslan Provodnikov (No. 3) vs. John Molina, junior welterweights, Verona, N.Y. (Showtime).
JUNE 25 – Keith Thurman (No. 5) vs. Shawn Porter (No. 6), welterweights (for Thurman's WBA title) (CBS). Also, Abner Mares (No. 5) vs. Jesus Cuellar (No. 7), featherweights.

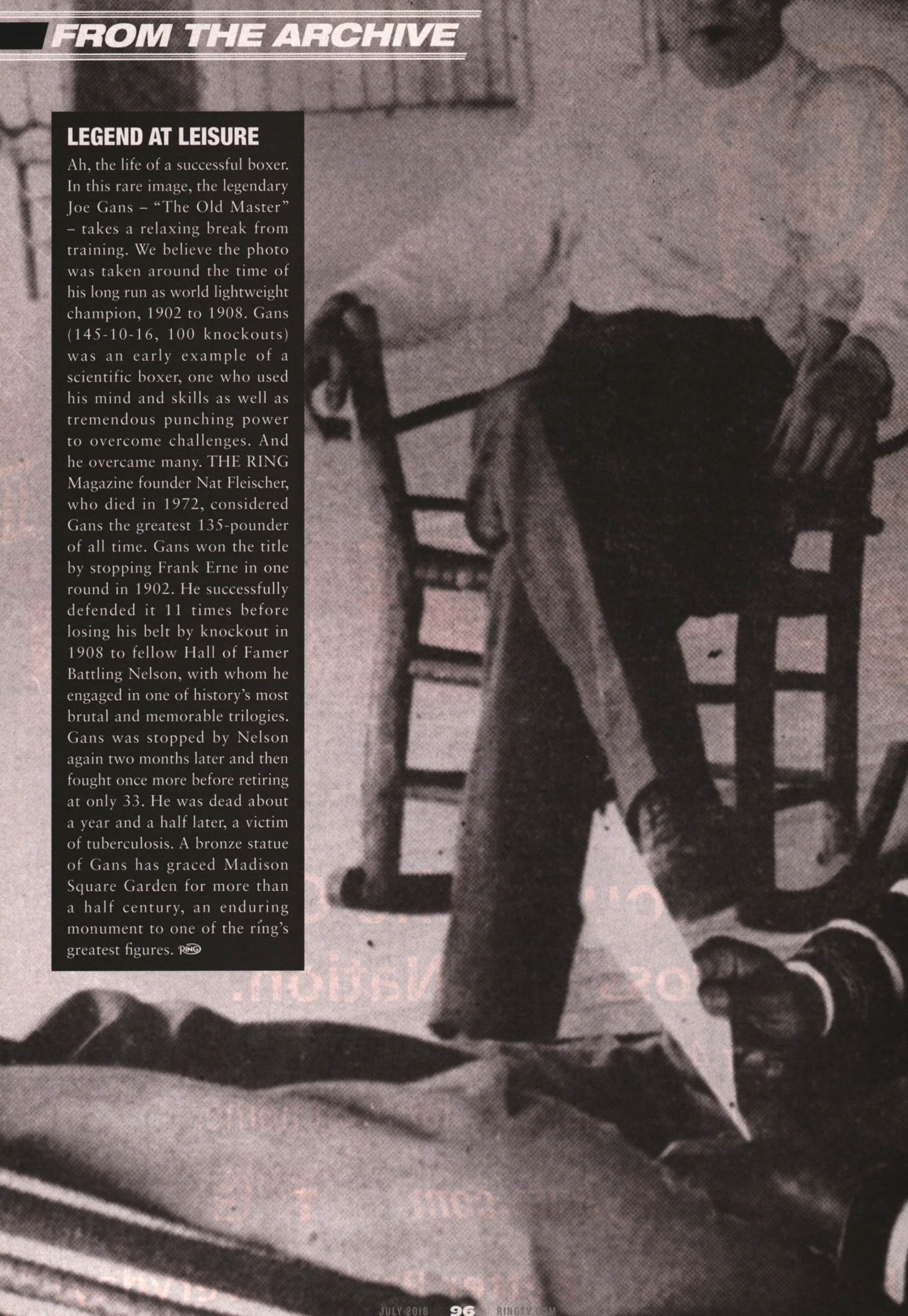
**NOTE:** The numbers in parentheses are the fighters' RING ratings at the time this issue went to press.

# Just Around The Corner... All Across The Nation.

With over 4,200 O'Reilly Auto Parts stores in 42 states, we're never far from home.

***OReillyAuto.com***

**Better Parts... Better Prices, Everyday!™**



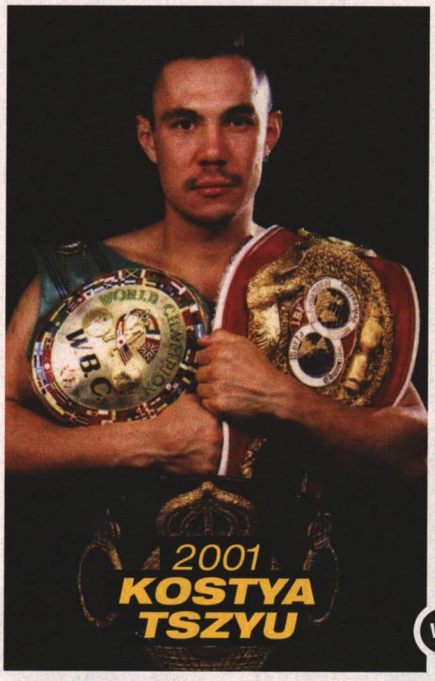
## LEGEND AT LEISURE

Ah, the life of a successful boxer. In this rare image, the legendary Joe Gans – "The Old Master" – takes a relaxing break from training. We believe the photo was taken around the time of his long run as world lightweight champion, 1902 to 1908. Gans (145-10-16, 100 knockouts) was an early example of a scientific boxer, one who used his mind and skills as well as tremendous punching power to overcome challenges. And he overcame many. THE RING Magazine founder Nat Fleischer, who died in 1972, considered Gans the greatest 135-pounder of all time. Gans won the title by stopping Frank Erne in one round in 1902. He successfully defended it 11 times before losing his belt by knockout in 1908 to fellow Hall of Famer Battling Nelson, with whom he engaged in one of history's most brutal and memorable trilogies. Gans was stopped by Nelson again two months later and then fought once more before retiring at only 33. He was dead about a year and a half later, a victim of tuberculosis. A bronze statue of Gans has graced Madison Square Garden for more than a half century, an enduring monument to one of the ring's greatest figures.

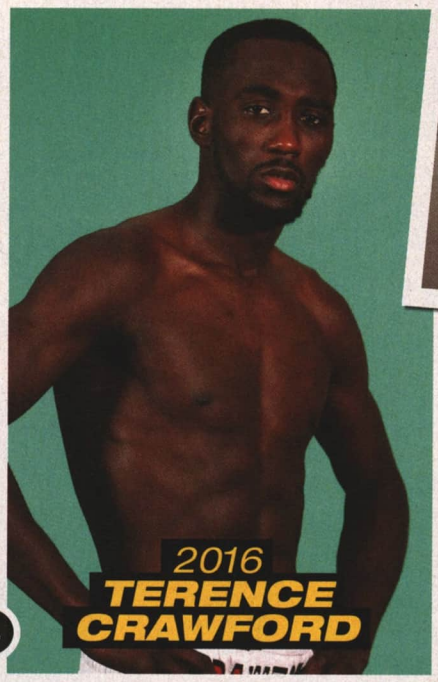
## FOR BOXING AFICIONADOS ONLY

# OLD SCHOOL vs. NEW SCHOOL

**WHO WINS? ★ VOTE ON INSTAGRAM @RINGTV ★ #ATTHEFIGHTS**



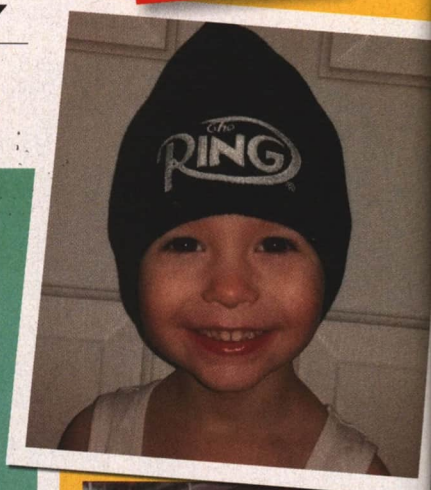

VS.

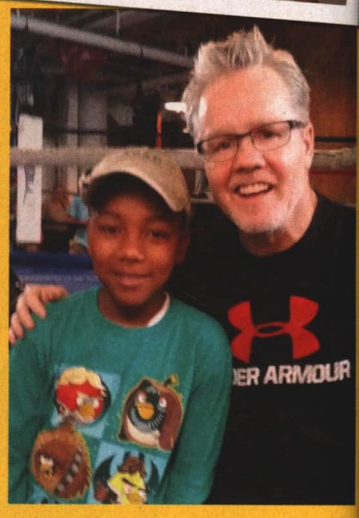



**TALE OF THE TAPE ★ JR. WELTERWEIGHT**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| SEPT. 19, 1969 | BORN | SEPT. 28, 1987 |
| SEROV, RUSSIA | BIRTHPLACE | OMAHA, NEB. |
| "THUNDER FROM DOWN UNDER" | ALIAS | "BUD" |
| ORTHODOX | STANCE | ORTHODOX |
| 31-2-0 (25 KOs) | RECORD | 28-0-0 (20 KOs) |
| 76 PERCENT | KO PERCENTAGE | 71 PERCENT |
| 67 INCHES | REACH | 70 INCHES |

## STYLES MAKE FIGHTS




**All in the RING family. At top, Jacob Gray of Motherwell, Scotland, son of contributor Tom Gray, sports a RING cap. Below, Monroe Clark of Queens, son of Art Director Lamar Clark, meets trainer Freddie Roach at Trinity Boxing Club in Manhattan.**

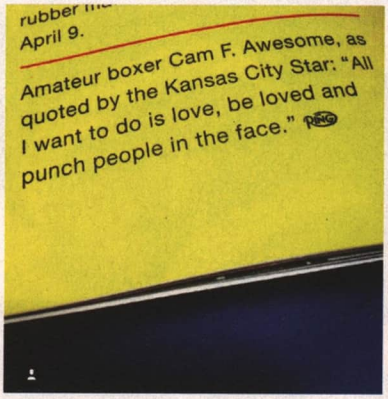
## RING LIKES!

**HOW DOES *THE RING* FIT INTO YOUR LIFESTYLE?** Share here!

Tag us (@ringtv) to your Instagram photo with #thebibleofboxing or tweet the pic to @ringmagazine #thebibleofboxing.

**wbcgreenbelt**

**ymalds**




**paulcupitt**

# THE BEST BOXING TRADITION

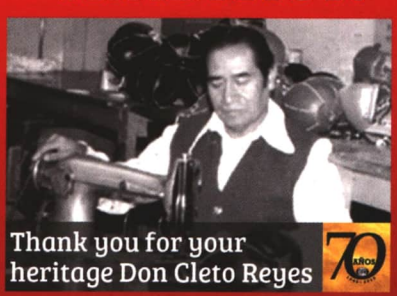
WWW.CLETOREYESSHOP.COM

LOOK FOR AUTHORIZED DEALERS ONLY

## GYM

## STORE

## TRADITION




619.863.4557 | 2625 IMPERIAL AVE. SAN DIEGO, CA 92102

CONCERTS, SPORTS
& THEATER TICKETS
WWW BARRYS TICKETS .COM
(800) 348-8499
ALL MLB, NBA, NFL, NCAA, NASCAR, SUPER BOWL, FINAL FOUR,
ALL STAR GAME & ALL MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS
www.BarrysTickets.com
WWW BARRYS TICKETS .COM
Great Tickets! Great Service! Great Prices!
Call (800) 348-8499 or visit BarrysTickets.com for great deals
on concerts, sports and theater tickets, local & nationwide!